

# FORMATION OF SOFT SKILLS IN FUTURE TEACHERS AS A CONDITION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TEACHER'S PROFESSIONAL STANDARD

Natalka Dudnyk<sup>1</sup>, Nataliia Bezliudna<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ph.D. in Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor at the Department of Pedagogy and Educational Management, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, Uman, Ukraine, E-mail: natalkadudnik@gmail.com, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4823-3463>

<sup>2</sup>Ph.D. in Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor at the Department of Pedagogy and Educational Management, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, Uman, Ukraine, E-mail: natashabezl@gmail.com, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1308-4448>

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**Abstract.** Soft skills play a leading role in student education, which is why their development in future teachers requires reflection in professional standards. The purpose of the article is to substantiate the need for the formation of soft skills in future teachers in the conditions of the implementation of the teacher's professional standard. To test the research hypothesis, various methods were used: conversation, observation, survey, questionnaire, methods of mathematical statistics for quantitative and qualitative analysis of experimental data, determination of the reliability of the results. The authors of the article considered options for the organization of educational activities of future teachers regarding the formation of soft skills as a condition for the implementation of the teacher's professional standard. The professional standard of the teacher was considered and a number of competencies were singled out, the formation of which depends on the development of soft skills. The results of the survey of teachers, education seekers and stakeholders regarding the problem of soft skills formation were analyzed and difficulties in their formation were revealed. A map of the development of soft skills in pedagogy classes is proposed, in particular, the potential of using the "inverted classroom" model as one of the advanced technologies for building the educational process is revealed.

**Keywords:** formation; soft skills; hard skills; future teachers; teacher's professional standard; educational process; institution of higher education; modern forms and technologies of education; "inverted classroom".

**JEL Classification:** I 23, I 29

**Formulas:** 0; **fig.:** 0; **tabl.:** 0; **bibl.:** 5

**Introduction.** The latest technologies, globalization, and the socio-economic situation in our country have significantly influenced its development. The results of education, which were sufficient for previous generations, are not enough to be successful in our time. In the conditions of the development of modern trends in general education and the active search for innovative school models, focused primarily on the interests of the student, a new type of teacher is being formed - a consultant, associate, educator, project manager, communicator, researcher, innovator, able to think outside the box, ready to flexibly respond to conditions, that are changing, and creatively solve professional tasks. Nowadays, the demand for such a teacher is in the center of attention of the teacher education system, the restructuring of which is increasingly determined by such challenges as public recognition of the need for changes in schools and the appropriate training of teachers, the presence of goals and objectives of educational policy formulated at the state level, requirements for teacher training from the employer, the regulatory framework for the modernization of pedagogical education.

**Literature review.** In this regard, the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture approved the professional standard for the following teaching professions:

1. Teacher of primary classes of general secondary education institution;
2. Teacher of general secondary education institution;
3. Primary education teacher (with a diploma of junior specialist).

“The new professional standard is the embodiment of the modern approach of the National Academy of Sciences to defining the list and description of the general and professional competencies of a teacher. The document defines general (civic, social, cultural, leadership and entrepreneurial) and professional (language-communicative, subject-methodical, information-digital, psychological, emotional-ethical, pedagogical partnership, inclusive, health-preserving, projective, prognostic, organizational, evaluative and analytical, innovative, reflective, ability to learn throughout life) competence of the teacher” [4]. Considering this, many of the competencies specified in the standard relate not only to teachers' acquisition of professional knowledge, but also to taking into account emotional and communication skills.

In foreign educational practice, emotional and communicative qualities are considered soft skills, or “soft” skills that complement hard skills - technical/“hard”/professional skills. Hard skills, as a rule, are narrowly professional, refer to job instructions and qualification characteristics. Soft skills, in contrast to hard skills, are a set of super-professional skills that are responsible for successful participation in the work process, high labor productivity; they are important for successful professional and life self-determination of any person, regardless of profession [2]. Soft skills include the ability to communicate, the ability to lead, cooperation, diplomacy, building relationships; the ability to present one's ideas, creatively solve tasks. Since the teaching profession involves the presentation of oneself and one's ideas, the ability to build relationships with various subjects of the educational process: students, parents, teachers, management, to demonstrate

leadership qualities, the formation of soft skills becomes especially relevant. The essence and content of the concept of soft skills have been researched and defined by many foreign (R. Bolstad, S. Boyd, K. Dweck, G. Claxton, G. Powell, R. Hipkins, M. Chambers, etc.) and domestic (O. Abashkina, E. Hayduchenko, V. Davydova, E. Yegorov, N. Zhadko, T. Kozhushkina, K. Koval, S. Nakhod, O. Sosnitska, L. Familyarska) by researchers, organizations (UN, OERS, EU). In particular, S. Nakhod substantiates the value of soft skills for the professional development of future specialists in socio-economic professions; L. Koval considers the development of soft skills among students as a factor in their successful employment; T. Kozhushkina investigates interpersonal interaction as a component of soft skills of students of the pedagogical college; Yehorov analyzes the development of soft skills in the training of future professionals in the tourism industry; A. Sokolova and G. Matyuha are working on the problem of developing soft skills in teaching English to schoolchildren; O. Zhukova investigates the development of soft skills in students in the process of extracurricular work through solving mathematical problems in the form of a game.

**Aims.** The purpose of the article is to substantiate the need for the formation of soft skills in future teachers in the conditions of the implementation of the teacher's professional standard.

**Methodology.** To test the research hypothesis, various methods were used: conversation, observation, survey, questionnaire, methods of mathematical statistics for quantitative and qualitative analysis of experimental data, determination of the reliability of the results.

**Results.** Considering that the teaching profession is designed not only to ensure the quantitative implementation of the tasks of compulsory education, but also to raise the education and culture of citizens to a much higher level, we believe that it is the high level of development of soft skills that will contribute to the formation of a free, energetic and independent personality of a teacher who is able to act in very fast-changing conditions and to be a role model for students. We agree with the opinion of L. Familyarska, who interprets soft skills as a sociological term that characterizes a list of personal characteristics that are somehow related to effective interaction in the process of professional activity: the ability to convince, find an approach to people, interpersonal communication, conducting negotiation processes, teamwork, personal development, erudition, creativity, communication interaction, high level of self-organization, etc. [3]. Regarding the classification of soft skills, in our opinion, the classification proposed by K. Koval is the closest to the teaching profession: individual qualities (the ability to make decisions and solve problems, clearly set tasks and formulate goals, positive thinking and optimism, customer orientation and the ultimate result); communication skills (the ability to clearly formulate thoughts, the ability to interact with different types of people, to structure and moderate meetings, to answer reasoned, clearly, on time and politely, to prepare and make high-quality presentations, to take cultural and international characteristics into account); managerial qualities ("play" in a team, unite and

motivate it, teach and develop each member, prevent risks and prevent their occurrence, clearly plan and manage working hours) [2].

As the analysis of scientific studies of the outlined problem and own experience shows, there are currently two approaches to the formation of soft skills. The first is to teach directly, introducing separate courses within the variable component of the curriculum: for example, some foreign universities (Harvard University, Stanford Research Institute, etc.) practice a team building course. The second approach is to use the potential of educational disciplines in combination with non-formal education and extracurricular work of education seekers.

When forming soft skills in future teachers, one should not only take into account what skills need to be formed, but also how to achieve the goal and how to diagnose the level of mastery of soft skills.

Based on the study of the literature and the survey of students of higher pedagogical education, teachers and stakeholders, we conducted an analysis of the current situation of the development of soft skills among future teachers in the educational process of the institution of higher pedagogical education. The results of the survey allow us to state that there are certain difficulties in the formation of soft skills, namely:

- insufficient interest in the problem of soft skills formation, personal attitudes towards understanding the importance of soft skills development;
- insufficiently developed vertical and horizontal connections between individual components of the process of professional training of future teachers (purpose, content, technologies, means, forms);
- weak diversification of psychological and pedagogical disciplines, their excessive theorization, separation from school practice;
- insufficient practical manifestation of various soft skills due to insufficiently developed connections between theoretical and practical pedagogical training;
- insufficient reliance on interdisciplinary connections, modern educational technologies and interactive forms and methods of learning and education;
- the difficulty of diagnosing the level of development of soft skills, as a result of which they practically remain unassessed;
- insufficient flexibility and mobility in the organization of the soft skills development process, which prevents prompt response to educational requests.

The results of the teachers' survey showed that only 20% of teachers purposefully include soft skills development tasks in the content of lectures and practical classes. 25% of teachers use technologies and methods of active and interactive learning (discussion, debate, case studies, decision tree, role-playing situations, cooperative learning, etc.).

Students, understanding the importance of soft skills, name traditional lecture-seminar classes, the stereotype of the teacher's role behavior, the lack of examples of a different way of behavior, as well as limited opportunities for acquiring implementation experience and soft skills in various interaction situations, as the main reasons for their insufficient development.

The revealed facts confirm the need to organize targeted work on the development of soft skills among future teachers in higher education institutions.

In our opinion, psychological and pedagogical disciplines and informal education have great potential in the development of soft skills.

We offer a map that we use for the purpose of forming soft skills in future teachers in pedagogy classes. This map contains three blocks:

1. cognitive skills development block: ability to think panoramically and critically (development of “teacher-learner” relationships); formation of project thinking (ability to predict, goal setting); development of decision-making skills in situations of lack of time (speed of reaction, speed of data processing); development of skills to creatively solve pedagogical tasks;

2. block of development of activity abilities: leadership qualities, ability to manage oneself and the audience (organizational abilities, verbal and non-verbal communication); the ability to create texts, the ability to visualize information; the ability to interact with other people;

3. block of development of personal abilities: the ability to express one's thoughts in public (the ability to express one's thoughts clearly, competently and comprehensively, to interest the audience with the prospect of an interesting and useful matter, self-presentation); the ability to work in a team (in particular, work in a project group); communication skills; the ability to motivate, inspire, captivate; the ability “to see” another person; mastering time management skills, self-organization).

By meaningfully focusing the activity of the teacher on the development of soft skills in future teachers, it is necessary to change the format and technology of interaction between teachers and students of education. Traditional forms of classes are not of interest to the modern generation of students. They are fascinated by gamification, e-learning (electronic learning), m-learning (mobile learning). Therefore, when designing forms of interaction with students in the process of developing soft skills, it is important to take into account a number of modern trends. For this, it is necessary: first, to implement the transition from knowledge transfer to knowledge creation. The availability of knowledge and the high speed of its exchange often allows to be more successful not the one who knows more, but the one who searches faster and better, identifying, analyzing and creating information; secondly, the transition from the traditional “teacher-student” system to “teacher-student” interaction, organization of interaction and teamwork; third, the transition from narrow specialization to cross-functional training. In the end, as practice shows, it is desirable to use various combinations of forms and methods of educational activities: work in the classroom, e-learning, projects (practical, social, etc.), simulations in order to maximize the involvement of future teachers and consolidate professional and soft skills competencies.

**Discussion.** At the pedagogy classes, we tested the “inverted classroom” model, aimed both at the development of soft skills and at the preparation of future teachers for its implementation in their professional activities. This model is one of the mechanisms for the implementation of mixed education, which is gaining popularity in advanced foreign and domestic practices. The idea of the “inverted class” consists

in the independent mastering of new knowledge by the students on the basis of specially prepared video resources (educational videos) with further discussion, consolidation and solving of creative and educational tasks in class. In our opinion, this model of education has a number of significant advantages: it optimizes the combination of traditional and innovative approaches to education, forms panoramic thinking and develops meta-subject skills; forms the ability to work in a team: teachers, students, teachers; the possibility of use in the system of inclusive education; mobility and ease of access to educational resources.

As our experience shows, such well-known forms as student self-government, volunteer programs, social projects, trainings, etc. have proven themselves well in the process of developing soft skills in extracurricular activities. Such forms of work allow, along with professional competences, to develop in future teachers the abilities of communication, leadership, cooperation, diplomacy, building relationships, forming motivation for success, forming team skills, the ability to present ideas, make decisions, and creatively solve tasks. These competencies belong to soft skills, the possession of which largely determines the success of students' future professional activities, helps to successfully implement themselves in a rapidly changing world.

All these are the first steps on the way to the transition to a new educational model of professional training of future teachers, which still require analytical understanding, but, it seems to us, are being created in line with modern trends in the development of education, state and public expectations and requests for it.

**Conclusions.** The authors of the article considered options for the organization of educational activities of future teachers regarding the formation of soft skills as a condition for the implementation of the teacher's professional standard. The professional standard of the teacher was considered and a number of competencies were singled out, the formation of which depends on the development of soft skills. The results of the survey of teachers, education seekers and stakeholders regarding the problem of soft skills formation were analyzed and difficulties in their formation were revealed. A map of the development of soft skills in pedagogy classes is proposed, in particular, the potential of using the "inverted classroom" model as one of the advanced technologies for building the educational process is revealed.

**Author contributions.** The authors contributed equally.

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