

RESEARCH ON PROFESSIONAL MISCONCEPTIONS OF FUTURE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS

^aOLGA V. FADEEVA, ^bSVETLANA V. SERGUNINA,
^cYULIA V. VARDANYAN, ^dNATALIA P. KONDRATYEVA,
^eELENA V. TSAREVA

*Mordovian State Pedagogical Institute named after
 M. E. Evseev, Studencheskaya str., 11 A, Saransk, Russia,
 430007*
*email: ^aofadeeva71@yandex.ru, ^bs-sergunina@rambler.ru,
^cjulia_vardanyan@mail.ru, ^dkondrateva-np@yandex.ru,
^edocent69@bk.ru*

Acknowledgments: The research was funded with the grant for the research and development on priority directions of scientific activities of the networking partner universities (Perm State University of Humanities and Pedagogy and Mordovian State Pedagogical Institute named after M.E. Evseev) on the topic "Examination of Professional Misconceptions of Future Educational Psychologists".

Abstract: This paper examines professional misconceptions of future educational psychologists that emerge during their studies at university. The research was carried out in the Mordovian Pedagogical Institute with participation of students whose field of study is Psychological and Pedagogical Education. Analysis of the obtained data helped to determine the common professional misconceptions typical for future educational psychologists, to describe the groups of students differentiated by their ability for pedagogical decentration and their misconceptions about the Child and the Adult positions. The obtained data validated a need in the targeted efforts directed at prevention and correction of professional misconceptions among future educational psychologists during their university studies.

Keywords: professional self-consciousness, professional misconception, ability for decentration, student, interaction, prevention of misconceptions.

1 Introduction

The rapid informational development of the society leads to changes in the requirements for an educational psychologist profession which in many respects is related to the transformation of educational processes at all stages of education. However, changes in the professional self-consciousness of future educational psychologists during their university studies do not always occur quickly, which is due to the existence of inadequate perceptions and stereotypes that hinder the effective implementation of their professional duties in the present-day world.

One of the important objectives of the higher education is to develop a graduate's subjectivity. Within such approach to own education, a future psychology teacher may consciously choose and acquire the activity components that align with their individual goals of professional self-fulfillment. But certain objective and subjective conditions of the university education may create constraints for the development and implementation by a student of their strategy and tactics of professional involvement. Such factors increase the risk of emergence of various misconceptions in professional self-consciousness. That's why a need arises to examine the specific features relating to the emergence, prevention and correction of misconceptions in the developing framework of professional self-consciousness of a future psychology teacher in order to minimize the professional pedagogical errors and to ensure the use of effective pedagogical solutions in real situations.

However, the research data in this domain are fragmentary which considerably hinders the prevention of acquisition of professional misconceptions during university studies leading to a negative impact on the students' readiness to perform job duties of a psychology teacher in order to reach the education goals. Thus, the growing contradiction between an objective need to identify and address the professional misconceptions of future educational psychologists and the fragmentary information about causes and factors leading to the entrenchment of misconceptions during studies at university increases the relevance of our research.

2 Literature Review

The professional activities of a psychology teacher relate to tackling professional tasks of varying complexity in the ever changing educational space. That's why the process of students' preparation for the job functions of psychology teachers and specialists of social service organizations in the conditions of a pedagogical university has its specific features which are explored in the studies by Anikeeva O. A. et al. (2019), Vardanyan Y. V. et al. (2018), Vinokurova G. A. et al. (2018), Shukshina T. I. (2018), Yashkova A. N., Kalimullin A. M. (2015).

The analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature on the topic under research revealed that presently the following aspects have found reflection in the psychological and pedagogical works: pedagogical myths (Maznichenko, 2019), pedagogical errors (Jozefavichus, 2014), pedagogical illusions (Bederdinova, 2014), pedagogical stereotypes (Slattenin, 2000), pedagogical difficulties (Polyakova, 1983). All the above categories have strong links by a number of common parameters with the professional pedagogical misconceptions.

Professional pedagogical misconceptions are viewed by M. A. Maznichenko (2019) as a component of teacher's professional thinking characterized by stiffness, inadequate perception of reality, inconsistency with the established pedagogical standards, one-sidedness of ideas and sociocultural limitedness. As pointed out by the author, a misconception may lead to various pedagogical errors, myths and illusions.

In our research, we examine professional misconceptions in the context of involvement of professional self-consciousness of a future psychology teacher. Professional self-consciousness in our understanding reflects the subjective, objective and substantive (result-related) components of the professional competence (Cherneeva, 2000). Within each of the above components various professional misconceptions may arise and undergo transformations, since formation and development of a student as a living individual is an ongoing process.

This research is aimed to explore professional misconceptions of future educational psychologists emerging in the substantive component of professional self-consciousness. Its content is determined by a combination of psychological and pedagogical knowledge and skills in organizing interactions with children with account of their individual psychological features.

Professional misconceptions occurring within this component may also be expressed in the ways of interaction and determination of strategy and tactics of assistance in the leading activity types, as well as in the ways of communication, demonstration of pedagogical centration, etc.

Some scholars whose ideas were reflected in the foreign researches explore various aspects of dynamics and quality of the teacher-student relationship (Britt, 2013; Cornelius-White, 2007; Spilt et al., 2012; Ly et al., 2012; Guzich & Pribega, 2015) that are the precursors of professional misconceptions.

Interaction between the subjects of education is an important component of pedagogical communication which implies a high probability of professional pedagogical errors that may be caused by professional misconceptions of objective or subjective nature.

A hallmark of communication, according to E. I. Rogov (2003), is that our attention is transferred from the communication partner to ourselves and the mirror reflections of each other kind of duplicate. That's why the communication engages the following positions of an individual: "Self" as I really am; "Self" as I see myself; "Self" as my communication partner sees me (Rogov, 2003). The same positions may be found in the interlocutor. Communicative errors may occur with respect to

each of these positions if the understanding of this duality is missing or distorted.

G. A. Tsukerman (2006) sees the interaction between a child and an adult when building a zone of proximal development as a place for "generation and formation of such interactions which are conducive to "encountering" (understanding, aligning, transforming) different experiences, different ways to comprehend this experience, different types of mediation, dividing the substance of experience from the emotions arising when living through it". However, with such a diversity of "encounters" an adult is inevitably exposed to various difficulties, errors and misconceptions in perception of a child as a living individual. This is validated in the study by S. V. Zaitsev (1995) who notes that "the adult's direction of the child development process turns into an illusion" (p. 40), since the process of mental development of a child may go according to the child's own coherent development program.

An extensive experience of V. A. Yasvin (2013) in conduction of group trainings for high school students and their teachers "shows the psychological unpreparedness of the latter for positive acceptance of students and real partnership with them. The "parental", often subject-object position of teachers in their relationship with students prevails, which is manifested in either hyper-care or the determination to fully subdue students to the teacher's will". It can be assumed that the teachers involved in this type of activity are guided by certain stereotypes or misconceptions when building the tactics of interaction.

In his research, L. M. Putyato (2001) comes to the conclusion that in communication between a teacher and a student, real understanding of the latter is rarely achieved; it is inhibited by the teacher's stereotypical perception of students through the lens of educational activities, with the perception of a student as a subject of this activity "separated" from the perception of the same student as a personality. Thus, it can be stated that the revealed stereotypes upon which the teachers rely are largely attributable to their professional misconceptions.

According to T. Jozefavichus (2014), timely identification and correction of professional misconceptions facilitates the cognitive engagement of a student through solution of psychological and pedagogical tasks of a problematic nature and induces the student to "consciously create rules" in atypical pedagogical situations. The author notes that if this is not done at the stage of professional pedagogical training, the pedagogical knowledge of students cannot serve as a reference framework for practical pedagogical actions.

At the same time, the survey revealed that the absence of a holistic study of the professional misconceptions of future educational psychologists, which complicates preventive work and amplifies interest to the topic under consideration.

3 Research Methodological Framework

The research purpose was to reveal and describe professional misconceptions of future educational psychologists relating to the substantive component of their professional self-consciousness.

The research objectives were as follows:

1. reveal the current professional misconceptions relating to the personality of a preschooler among students whose field of study is Psychology in Education and Social Sphere;
2. reveal the personal attitude of future educational psychologists to children;
3. explore the expressed misconceptions relating to the interactions within a teacher-student diad.

The research covered 38 third-year students of the Department of Psychology and Defectology at Mordovian State Pedagogical Institute named after M. E. Evseev whose field of study is Psychological and Pedagogical Education. The respondents were aged 19-20. The respondents included 35 girls and 3 boys. The

time span of this research stage was from September to October 2019.

For achieving the first objective, we used a method "Children in the Tutor's Eyes" (Petrovsky et al., 1993), which was modified by us in the part of child's personal qualities offered for evaluation.

The list of children's qualities was compiled, and on its basis the generalized images "A child in whom I see a personality", "A child who irritates me", "A child who is the same as others", "A child who is different from others" were created.

Students were asked to complete the table, evaluating each quality with scores ranging from -3 (if this quality is not expressed at all) to +3 (if this quality is expressed in a child at the highest degree).

In order to reveal the personal attitude of future educational psychologists to children in our study, we used the methodology of S. V. Zaitsev (1995), which aim is to assess the ability for pedagogical decentration, the structure of teachers' attitude to children.

The descriptions by students of pictures of three types from the Child and the Adult positions were recorded, and it was also traced whether in their descriptions they make a conscious differentiation between these positions and why. Each student also described the distinctive psychological features of an adult and a child.

For achieving the third objective of the research, we used the materials developed by J. L. Kolominsky (Rean & Kolominsky 2000). Students were offered a list of pedagogical atypical situations, and asked to express their attitude to each situation (agree - disagree).

Quantitative processing of results included giving points for each agreement with the expressed misconception. The resultant scores were used to divide students into three categories characterizing different level of expression of professional misconceptions: under 3 – low; under 6 – medium and under 13 – high.

4 Results and Discussion

The method "Children in the Tutor's Eyes" (Petrovsky et al., 1993) helped to yield the following results. Using Pearson's correlation method, we revealed a correlation between the images offered for ranking. It was found that for some students (38%) the correlation between the images "A child in whom I see a personality" and "A child who is the same as others" is 0.7. This fact indicates that students are mostly oriented towards an "average" child, some impersonal standard. However, it is generally known that there is no average child, each child is beautiful in his/her individuality. So, already at the formative stage of professional self-consciousness students have misconceptions with regard to personal characteristics of preschoolers.

The correlation (0.67) has been revealed between the images "A child who irritates me" and "A child who is different from others". In other words, the intolerance of future educational psychologists is projected on children who do not correspond to their ideas of an "average" child. Answers of students (43%) revealed that children showing any personal distinctness in their behavior require increased attention to themselves, distract the teacher's from the group of children, and sometimes their behavior leads to pedagogical impotence.

The obtained results indicate the existence of professional misconceptions in this sample of future educational psychologists regarding understanding and acceptance of the child's personality.

The results obtained using S. V. Zaitsev's method (1995) helped to distinguish 5 groups of students differentiated by their ability

for pedagogical decentration and their misconceptions about the Child and the Adult positions.

1. The centered identification group characterized by projection of an "adult" behavior model on a child and expectation of an identical response;
2. The centered detachment group also determines the child's characteristics from the position of adulthood and denies the child's ability to perform analysis when describing events;
3. The pseudocentered group characterized by an adequate real description of pictures from the "Child" position identical to the description from the "Adult" position. In this group, descriptions of two types have been observed, in which students attributed specific traits of a child to the "adult" descriptions due to the peculiarities of their own character, which preserved the features of a child;
4. The potentially centered group is characterized by inadequate description of pictures from the "Child" position. It should be noted, however, that students who demonstrated this model of behavior were not consistently sticking to it in all tasks of the experiment, but often showed pseudo-decentration. This testifies to the fact that these students preserved in their character some childish traits, due to which they involuntarily get close to the real descriptions of children of older preschool age when interpreting the pictures from the Child or "I am myself as a Child" position;
5. Students of the real-centered group give an adequate, but not always complete assessment of descriptions specific to a child, while noting the substantial differences in the descriptions by a child and an adult. Their comparative analysis of age-specific features typical for an adult and a child included more dimensions and was not reduced to "more/ less" characteristics. For example, if a student mentioned that a child has less knowledge as compared to an adult, it was immediately noted that the child's imagination is more loose and not chained by stereotypes.

Analysis of the data collected using the method of S. V. Zaitsev shows that the first three groups of students who took part in the research displayed certain misconceptions relating to understanding and evaluation of the Child position.

Observation of students' activities during their internships revealed that in communication with a child they mainly focused on the content of conversation, while almost neglecting the aspects of interactive and perceptual engagement with the child. As pointed out by S. V. Zaitsev (1995), "preschoolers often focus not on what an adult says, but on how it is said or what the nonverbal message is". Thus, the students' lack of knowledge about the mechanism of acceptance and understanding of the other gives rise to misconceptions about the child's level of development and wrong tactics of interaction with the child.

The analysis of data acquired using the method of J. L. Kolominsky (Rean & Kolominsky 2000) showed that in the studied sample 40% of students have a medium level of expression of professional misconceptions, 12% of future educational psychologists showed results corresponding to a high level and 48% of respondents - to a low level.

The most common misconceptions relate to the following statements: if an error is made, it should be concealed so that students' opinion of the teacher does not get worse; teachers may not show their professional incompetence in any matter.

Thus, the experimental data obtained in the research indicate the professional misconceptions arising in the substantive component of the professional self-consciousness of future educational psychologists.

5 Conclusion

In our research, we proceeded from an assumption that professional misconceptions should be examined in the development context of professional consciousness of future educational psychologists. On the basis of this assumption, we conducted an experimental study of professional misconceptions

of future educational psychologists relating to their psychological and pedagogical knowledge and skills in organizing interactions with children with account of their individual psychological features.

The study identified the current misconceptions of future educational psychologists relating to the personality of a preschooler. Also, the groups of students were differentiated by their ability for pedagogical decentration and their misconceptions about the Child and the Adult positions, the levels of their misconceptions relating to interactions within a teacher-student diad were examined.

The results of the research showed that a fairly large group of students have professional misconceptions that hinder the effective interaction in the educational process. This fact highlights the need in the targeted efforts directed at prevention and correction of professional misconceptions among future educational psychologists during their university studies.

Literature:

1. Anikeeva, O. A., Sizikova, V. V., Kozlovskaya, S. N., Shimanovskaya, Y. V., Akhtyan, A. G., Vorontsova, E. A.: *Professional and Personal Competences of Managerial Staff in the System of Social Services for the Population*. AD ALTA- Journal of Interdisciplinary Research, 9(1), 2019. 51-54 pp.
2. Bederdinova, O. R.: *The Content of "Pedagogical Illusions" Notion*. Nauka | Rastudent.ru, 10, 2014. 24-26 pp.
3. Britt, J. E.: *Teacher-Student Relationships and Student Achievement in Grades Six and Seven Mathematics*. VA, Lynchburg: Liberty University, 2013. 287 p.
4. Cherneeva, O. V.: *Formation of Professional Self-Consciousness of a Tutor at a Pre-School Educational Institution in the Conditions of Pedagogical University*: PhD thesis. Yaroslavl, 2000. 16 p.
5. Cornelius-White, J.: *Learner-Centered Teacher – Student Relationships are Effective: A Meta-Analysis*. Review of Educational Research, 77, 2007. 113-143 pp.
6. Maznichenko, M. A.: *Correction of Pedagogical Activity: Textbook and Practical Manual for the Academic Bachelor's Degree Program*. Moscow: Urait, 2019. 142 p.
7. Guzych, M., Pribega, A.: *Development of the Professional Value Orientations of Students of Surgut Educational Institutions*. International Journal of Economics and Education, 1(2), 2015. 95-110 pp.
8. Jozefavichus, T. A.: *Pedagogical Errology in the Training of Future Teachers*. Moscow: Moscow State Regional University, 2014.
9. Ly, J., Zhou, Q., Chu, K., Chen, S. H.: *Teacher-Child Relationship Quality and Academic Achievement of Chinese-American Children in Immigrant Families*. Journal of School Psychology, 50, 2012. 535-553 pp.
10. Petrovsky, V. A., Vinogradova, A. M., Klarina, L. M., etc.: *Let's Learn to Communicate with a Child: Guidance for a Tutor*. Moscow: Prosveschenie, 1993. 191 p.
11. Polyakova, T. S.: *Analysis of Complications in Pedagogical Activities of Beginning Teachers*. Moscow: Pedagogy, 1983. 129 p.
12. Putyato, L. M.: *Cognitive Aspects of Teacher's Communication with Students of Varying Academic Performance*. World of Psychology: Scientific and Methodical Journal, 3(27), 2001. 115-122 pp.
13. Rean, A. A., Kolominsky, J. L.: *Social Pedagogical Psychology*. SPb: Piter, 2000. 416 p.
14. Rogov, E. I.: *Psychology of Communication*. Moscow: Vldos, 2003. 334 p.
15. Shukshina, T. I.: *Substantive-Processual Aspects of Professionally-Oriented Training Organization of Students of Pedagogical University*. Astra Salvensis, VI, 2018. 665-673 pp.
16. Slastenin, V. A.: *Pedagogical Process as a System*. Moscow: Magister-Press, 2000. 488 p.
17. Spilt, J. L., Hughes, J. N., Wu, J., Kwok, O.: *Dynamics of Teacher-Student Relationships: Stability and Change Across Elementary School and the Influence on Children's Academic Success*. Child Development, 83, 2012. 1180-1195 pp.

18. Tsukerman, G. A.: *Interaction Between a Child and an Adult for Creation of a Zone of Proximal Development*. Cultural and Historical Psychology, 2(4), 2006. 61-73 pp.
19. Vardanyan, Y. V., Vardanyan, L. V., Vdovina, N. A., Kondratyeva, N. P., Sergunina, S. V., Fadeeva, O. V.: *Characteristics of Monitoring of Practice-Oriented Competences of Future Educational Psychologist in Russian University*. International Journal of Engineering & Technology, 7(4.38), 2018. 607-612 pp.
20. Vinokurova, G. A., Tashcheva, A. I., Yashkova, A. N., Posysoev, N. N., Zhedunova, L. G., Gladkikh, V. V., Egorova, E. V.: *The Model of Improving Pedagogues' Skills Directed Towards the Formation of Competences in the Field of Special Needs Students' Socialization*. Modern Journal of Language Teaching Methods, 8(5), 2018. 296-310 pp.
21. Yashkova, A. N., Kalimullin, A. M.: *The Features of Manifestation of Students' Subjectness*. Review of European Studies, 5, 2015. 211-216 pp.
22. Yasvin, V. A.: *Attitude of Teachers to Students as a Factor of Quality of the Educational Environment*. Social Psychology and Society, 3, 2013. 143-151 pp.
23. Zaitsev, S. V.: *Assessment of Educators' Abilities for Decentration*. Questions of Psychology, 4, 1995. 36-48 pp.

Primary Paper Section: A

Secondary Paper Section: AM, AN