



# The study of readiness of future teachers psychologists to Sensemaking professional activities

## El estudio de la preparación de futuros psicólogos docentes para las actividades profesionales de Sensemaking.

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#### ABSTRACT:

The article reveals the importance and necessity of studying the process of formation of readiness of future teachers-psychologists to sense-forming professional activity. The article presents the results of experimental work to determine the importance of personality profile and its readiness for regulatory flexibility, independence and self-regulation with the studied process;

#### RESUMEN:

el artículo revela la importancia y la necesidad de estudiar el proceso de formación de la preparación de los futuros psicólogos y maestros para la actividad profesional de formación de los sentidos. El artículo presenta los resultados del trabajo experimental para determinar la importancia del perfil de la personalidad y su disposición para la flexibilidad normativa, la independencia y

analysis of emotional and imaginative understanding of the set of professional actions necessary for their professional activities. Conclusions are presented that the readiness of future teachers-psychologists to sense-forming professional activity is interconnected with intellectual-volitional sense-forming professionally significant experience of their self-development in the course of educational activity.

**Keywords:** readiness, future teachers-psychologists

autorregulación con el proceso estudiado; Análisis de la comprensión emocional e imaginativa del conjunto de acciones profesionales necesarias para sus actividades profesionales. Se presentan las conclusiones de que la preparación de los futuros maestros y psicólogos para la actividad profesional de la formación de los sentidos está interconectada con la experiencia intelectual significativa de la formación de los sentidos de su propio desarrollo en el curso de la actividad educativa.

**Palabras clave:** Preparación, futuros profesores-psicólogos.

## 1. Introduction

The strategic goals of the socio-economic development of Russia have defined a number of fundamental problems whose solving will allow us to execute the shaped plans. One of these problems is poor compliance of the vocational education quality with the prospective needs of the labour market. It reveals itself in various aspects. The development of socio-economic structures in the Russian Federation specifies the existence of new performance requirements for specialists of all disciplines, with a social mandate for the higher vocational education system changing accordingly; as a result, the student training system must be sensitive to the changeable environment of the labour market and aimed at students readiness for sense-making professional engagement.

Poor students readiness for sense-making professional engagement results in ineffective professional identity and personal self-fulfilment.

The scientific and pedagogical literature data analysis has shown that the contemporary science studies the readiness for sense-making professional engagement at the following levels:

- personal, whereby the readiness is considered as a manifestation of individual and personal qualities determined by the nature of one's life work (B. G. Ananyev, 2001, A. N. Leontyev, 2005 et al);

- functional, which represents it as a temporary readiness and performance, pre-launch activation of mental functions, the ability to mobilize the necessary physical and mental resources for the implementation of business functions (E. P. Ilyin, 2005 et al);

personal-pragmatist, which identifies readiness as a holistic manifestation of all aspects of personality, which makes it possible to effectively exercise one's functions (A. A. Derkach, 2004).

Studies by D. A. Leontyev, 2003 and I. V. Abakumova, 2003, highlight the need to update the concept of "readiness for sense-making professional engagement" in the theory and practice of vocational education.

## **1.1. Essential characteristics of the study of readiness of future teachers-psychologists to sensemaking professional activities**

The individual's readiness for the sense-making professional engagement is the quality of the individual's activity, which has its drivers and regulators. Among the most important mechanisms of regulation of a personal activity we specify the individual's motivation, its ability to reflect. A high level of an individual's psychological readiness for sense-making professional engagement will also correspond to a high level of personal activity to enter the sense-making professional engagement. High personal activity to enter a profession, prompted by an adequate motivation and coupled with an optimal mental state corresponds to such a level of personal development where an individual is psychologically ready for the sense-making professional engagement. An individual with low psychological readiness will be characterized by passivity, formal execution, and emotional rejection of the professional engagement goals. The conceptual substantiation of an individual's readiness for the sense-making professional engagement in the contemporary scientific knowledge suggests that:

- an individual's readiness is a special property, a holistic manifestation of personality that occupies an intermediate position between mental processes and personal traits; a synthesis of personal traits that determine its suitability for activity; multi-level structure of personal qualities that allow an individual to carry out certain activities;
- an individual's readiness for engagement is an individual's ability to manifest a specific set of skills and competencies, the process of the formation of certain skills, which is achieved through the stages of external observation, mastering the practices and self-performance.
- an individual's readiness for professional engagement comprises the following characteristics: common qualities; qualities that determine the specifics of the profession of a teacher; competencies;
- an individual's readiness for the sense-making professional engagement is an individual's the ability to make use of existing skills and competencies based on intrinsic motivation and cognitive regulators of learning practices.

It should be noted that "the main problem of modelling sense-making education on the basis of its participants' manifestation of cross-functional learning practices in the paradigm of the system-activity interaction lies in the identification of the conditions that will ensure the students' right to choose, implement didactic tools that initiate sense formation in the educational process" (V. V.Sokhranov-Preobrazhensky, 2013, p. 164). An individual's readiness for the sense-making professional engagement in the view of C. R. Rogers (2004) is better addressed through the simulation of this process, which contains its most

characteristic features.

The competitiveness of specialists in the labour market is achieved by solving the problem of students vocational training for their future professional engagement, with the main component being their readiness for the sense-making self-organization and self-actuating in the educational process.

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## 2. Methodology

A dynamic structure of the state of readiness for sense-making professional engagement serves as an integral entity and comprises a number of personal attributes: motivating, cognitive, emotional, conative, etc. Accordingly, the factors that affect the level of readiness of the individual for professional engagement can be derived from these characteristics. The motivating factor is considered as the first factor, since it is this factor that determines the attitude to the profession, as well as the value-semantic aspects of satisfying various human needs in professional engagement. The rejection of the goals of professional engagement at the emotional level indicates a lack of formation of the semantic load of the entire structure of professional engagement, including its subject, goals and objectives (I. V. Abakumova, 2003 et al).

The readiness of an individual for the sense-making professional engagement as a certain mental state serves as an indicator of the relationship between the motivation of professional engagement and the individual's success (I. S. Yakimanskaya et al). Depending on the state of readiness that prevails in an individual at one time or another, we can assume the extent to which the motivation is actualized and how this type of motivation relates to the emotional sphere of a specialist.

Emotional states of an individual serve as an indicator of an individual's success in the activity and act as regulators in professional engagement. "Prerequisites for the emergence of readiness for the engagement are the understanding and awareness of responsibility, the desire to succeed, the determination of the sequence and methods. The materialisation of readiness is hampered by a passive attitude towards activity, carelessness, indifference, the lack of an action plan or the intention to make the most of their experience" (V.I. Stepansky, 1981, p. 59).

The readiness of future university educational psychologists for their sense-making professional engagement is studied on the basis of the implementation of the following set of criteria: emotional and visual comprehension of the set of professional practices related to professional engagement; intellectual and conative sense-making professionally significant development of future educational psychologists; conscious self-organization of learning activity, semantic professionally significant correction of an educational action.

The designated set of criteria is analysed with the following methods (interviews, observation, survey) and approaches: the Schwartz's Portrait Value Questionnaire; the D.A. Leontyev Life-purpose Orientations test;

the Mehrabian's Stimulus Screening Questionnaire; the Morosanova's Self-Regulation Profile Questionnaire; The Amirkhan's Coping Strategy Indicator (CSI).

The accuracy of our findings is assessed by the mathematical and statistical data processing: the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient is used to identify the strength and direction of correlations and the criterion for the Mann-Whitney U-test (using IBM SPSS Statistics 20).

## **2.1. Assessment of the effectiveness of the readiness of future psychology teachers**

The study considering the key findings of the developed concept was conducted on the basis of Penza State University, and the additional testing of the research model was carried out in Leysin American School in Switzerland.

To address the objectives of the experimental work, we used the concepts of the formation of future educational psychologists' readiness for sense-making professional engagement developed by Pryazhnikov, 2008 et al. Summarizing the findings and results of the research on the problem of the formation of future educational psychologists' readiness for sense-making professional engagement, two directions were implemented in the course of the formative experiment:

- conscious construction of an individual trajectory of the vocational self-actuating of future educational psychologists in the university professional environment;
- simulation of socio-psychological and pedagogical situations accompanying the process of the formation of educational psychologists' readiness for sense-making professional engagement.

Let us consider the results of the educational psychologists' readiness for sense-making professional engagement based on the analysis of the emotional and visual comprehension of the set of professional practices related to their professional engagement.

In order to diagnose the readiness of future psychologists to identify an emotionally significant image of their professional actions, a content analysis of the essay on the topic "I see the meaning of life in ..." was conducted.

To diagnose the achievement motivation in future psychologists, they have been tested using the Mehrabian's Stimulus Screening Questionnaire.

Based on the Mehrabian's findings, 1972, we can consider only a prevailing stimulus.

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## **3. Results**

At the time of measurement of the explicit achievement motive (16%), the university students in their educational process are focused neither

on the achievement motivation, nor on the failure avoidance motivation. Analysing the presented results we can say that the prevailing stimulus for 42% of university students is to avoid failures. This failure avoidance motivation indicator in university students may be explained by either failing at the school education stage or the failure formed in the earlier age periods by intrinsic motivation due to a life situation. These indicators are conditioned by various reasons, and their manifestation in behaviour and activity leads to the fear of a repetition of failure, which requires a professional psychological aid.

Furthermore, 42% of university students are characterized by achievement motivation, which is based on the principles that the goals achievement does not conflict with the priority values of an individual. Thus, the choice of a direction towards the goal is effective in the case the students are capable of setting priorities. The work carried out in the course of the study suggests that achievement motivation implies the ability of future educational psychologists to coordinate their actions in a timely manner depending on current circumstances and intermediate results, while constantly keeping the final intended goal in focus. At the same time, the decisive factor in the achievement motivation is a deep awareness of the chosen profession, as well as the ability to use an individual style of activity. Accordingly, it is the university professional environment that can contribute to the primary formation of readiness of a future educational psychologist for conscious self-organization of learning activity.

Accordingly, this type of thinking and behaviour can pose an obstacle to success and a balanced life, as well as at the stage of training for sense-making professional engagement.

### **3.1. Results of the study**

To measure the emotional dynamism of educational activities, the students have undergone the D.A. Leontyev's Life-purpose Orientations test.

The majority of 1-2 year students, the future educational psychologists, are characterized by an average (specified) level of emotional richness of life; they are focused on giving their life meaningfulness, direction, and time perspective. In other words, while learning, a student tends to designate the professional context of learning activities. At the same time, our sample group does not represent a high level of significance of the results obtained (0%) on the richness of life, which speaks not only of purposefulness, but also of those who do not always support their plans with personal responsibility for these plans implementation.

Low richness-of-life level (25%) in the future educational psychologists indicates the fact that these students live for the now or in the past, not focusing on the future or future professional engagement.

Mathematical-statistical data processing for the first component of the

students' readiness for the sense-making professional engagement, i.e. the emotional and visual comprehension of the set of professional practices related to their professional engagement, was based on the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, which measures the tightness (strength) and direction of the correlation between two characteristics (between motivation and emotional richness of the student's life). A significant positive correlation between motivation and emotional richness of the student's life  $rs = 0.265$  was revealed at 5% level of significance.

Based on the data obtained, it can be assumed that there is an interrelation between the criteria for the emotional and visual comprehension of the required set of professional actions in the forming the future educational psychologists' readiness for the sense-making professional engagement. Having an achievement motivation, the future educational psychologists will most likely be focused on enriching their life with meaningfulness, direction, and time perspective, which contributes to the development of students' readiness for sense-making professional engagement.

The analysis of the students' emotional and visual comprehension of the set of professional practices related to their professional engagement is supplemented by the study of the second component of readiness of the future educational psychologists for sense-making professional engagement, i.e. the intellectual and conative sense-making professionally significant development of students. It is diagnosed based on the readiness of students to search for and implement the personal meanings of future professional action, based on the V. I. Morosanova's Self-Regulation Profile Questionnaire.

According to Konopkin O. A., 2004, the common self-regulation ability is manifested in the successful mastery of new (more complex) types and forms of activity outwardly expressing in the successful resolution of non-standard tasks and overcoming atypical situations at all levels of mastering various activities, as well as the persistence in achievement. Internally, self-regulation is characterized, above all, by awareness, an understanding of the basis of the activity as a whole, its purpose, conditions, methods, evaluation of results, etc. (N.A. Aminov, 2013, p.135).

In the context of the rational regulation of an individual's behaviour and activities, including professional engagement, we consider the students self-regulation study results.

Based on the data obtained on students' readiness for self-regulation, which characterizes the formation of an individual system of conscious self-regulation of arbitrary activity, 46% are characterized by a low level, that is, the majority of future educational psychologists in our sample group have not developed a conscious planning and programming of their behaviour. They are more dependent on other people opinions and the current situation, while the possibility of compensating for the unfavourable personal characteristics of such students to achieve goals is

reduced compared with students with a high level of self-regulation. In this case, others' opinion is decisive for the the students' awareness of their success. The success of mastering new activities to a large extent depends on the compliance of the stylistic features of the regulation and the requirements of the type of activity being mastered. Therefore, despite the influence of the professional university environment, such students are most likely to be less prepared for the sense-making professional engagement due to the reduced, undirected personal activity of the students.

24% of students with a high level of self-regulation are marked by self-consistency, flexibility and adequate response to changing conditions, while setting and achieving goals for them is to a large extent a conscious choice.

Accordingly, the higher the level of conscious self-regulation, the more confident a student will feel in unknown situations, the more sustainable his/her success in identifying the meaning of routine activities will be. Furthermore, it is the level of conscious self-regulation that the students' response style to vocational training, which acts as a process of mastering the meanings of future professional engagement, will depend on. Therefore, it is the average or high level of the students' readiness for self-regulation that is important in the experimental work on the formation of students' readiness for their sense-making professional engagement.

The studies by O. A. Konopkin, 2004 and V.I. Morosanova, 2010, as well as our observations, allow us to conclude that the quality of self-regulation of an individual correlates with both the main regulatory processes (planning, simulation, programming, evaluation of results) and personal characteristics (flexibility and self-consistency), which are determinants of a student's readiness for self-regulation, a process that serves as the basis of a person's readiness for sense-making professional engagement.

Planning reflects the individual characteristics of the goal-setting and retention of the goals of the university students and the level of development in the conscious planning of their professional engagement. At the same time, 15% of 1-2 year students have formed the need for conscious planning of the quality of educational activities in the context of the formation of their readiness for sense-making professional engagement. In this case, planning corresponds to the students' awareness of the professional meaning of the learning activity and is characterized by detailed elaboration, the presence of hierarchy and sustainability, and the performance goals are set forth on their own initiative.

In 35% of students, the need for planning is poorly developed, therefore, they often change their plans, and the goal is rarely achieved, planning is not effective, unrealistic. Such students prefer not to think about their future, they set goals contextually and usually independently, which

influences the formation of readiness for the for sense-making professional engagement at the university level.

Evaluation of the results characterizes the individual capacity and adequacy of self-assessment and evaluated results of their activities and behaviour. 5% of students are characterized by high rates on this scale, which indicates the development and self-acceptance, maturity and stability of subjective assessment criteria for their achievements. These students adequately assess both the fact of misalignment of the results obtained with the purpose of activity, and the root causes, flexibly adapting to changing conditions.

38% of students reveal low scores on this scale, which is manifested in the absence of the ability to notice their mistakes, non-critical assessment of their actions. Subjective success criteria are not sufficiently stable, which results in a rapid deterioration in the quality of results with an increase in workload, deterioration or origination of external difficulties.

Morosanova's Self-Regulation test has been performed to assess the personal characteristics (flexibility and self-consistency), which determine the student's readiness for self-regulation, and the results obtained are as follows.

Flexibility diagnoses the maturity level of regulatory flexibility, i.e. the ability to rebuild the system of self-regulation due to the changes in external and internal conditions. 15% of students with high rates on the scale of flexibility are characterized by the plasticity of all regulatory processes. In the event of unforeseen circumstances, such students easily rearrange plans and programs of their performance and behaviour, they are able to quickly assess changes in significant conditions and readjust the "road map". In the event of a misalignment of the results obtained with the set goal, the very fact of this mismatch is timely assessed, and corrections are made to the regulation. Regulation flexibility allows us to adequately respond to the rapid change of events and successfully solve the task at risk. 43% of students with low score on the scale of flexibility feel insecure in a dynamic, rapidly changing environment, they scarcely get used to changes in life, changing environments and lifestyles. In such conditions, despite the regulation maturity, they are unable to adequately respond to the situation, quickly and timely plan their activities and behaviour, elaborate an action plan, highlight significant conditions, evaluate the misalignment of the results with the purpose of activity, and make corrections. As a result, such rates inevitably experience self-regulation failures and, as a result, failures in their performance.

Self-consistency characterizes the development of regulatory self-dependence. The fact that 5% of students have high scores on the self-consistency scale testifies to their self-dependence in the organization of activities, their ability to independently plan activities and behaviour, organize work to achieve a set goal, monitor its progress, analyse and

evaluate both intermediate and final performance results. 45% of students with low scores on the self-consistency scale are dependent on opinions and ratings of others. Action plans and programs are developed dependently, such students often and uncritically follow other people's advice, furthermore, they inevitably have regulatory failures without exterior help.

In addition to assessment the level of self-regulation, this method helps to identify a typical profile of self-regulation. In our study, we use weighted average indicators for the entire sample as measured against the general level of self-regulation.

The majority of 1-2 year students (42%) are characterized by an average (normative) level of satisfaction with self-realization, which indicates a sufficient level of satisfaction in university students for their life period. At the same time, 18% of students are characterized by a high level of satisfaction with self-realization, which is reflected in the predominance of the subjective assessment of their life period as being productive and meaningful. The students with a low life satisfaction level (40%) indicates that these students are not satisfied with their life period and can assess the past as not fully conscious and effective. This may adversely affect their readiness to purposefully form vocational training for a subsequent professional self-realization both at the theoretical training stage, and at the practical training stage.

In addition to satisfaction with self-realization, an important component of the process being studied is the conscious attitude towards oneself as a person who has the freedom of choice (Internal Locus of Control) and the controllability of life (External Locus of Control).

Mathematical-statistical data processing of the second component of the students' readiness for the sense-making professional engagement, i.e. the intellectual and conative sense-making professionally significant development of students, was based on the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, which measures the tightness (strength) and direction of the correlation between the following characteristics:

- A significant positive correlation between the general level of self-regulation and the students' satisfaction with self-realization  **$r_s = 0.541$**  was revealed at 1% level of significance.
- A significant positive correlation between self-planning and the controllability of life  **$r_s = 0.468$**  was revealed at 1% level of significance.
- Revealed was a significant positive correlation between the self-regulation components, which indicates the diagnostic value and reliability of this method.

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## 4. Conclusions

The development of the national education system takes place in an innovative civilization-cultural situation. In terms of vocational education, the teaching staff has faced the problem of changing the paradigm of

personal vocational training. The concept of a person selection for a certain type of professional activity has been replaced by a search for a professional field that is identical to a combination of personal traits and characteristics. This has actualized the search for solutions to address the issues that arise in the course of students' vocational training. In particular, the formation of their readiness for the sense-making professional engagement.

## 4.1. Suggestions

A vocationally-required level of students' readiness for the sense-making professional engagement based on the implementation of the model will be achievable subject to their conscious self-organization based on manifestation in learning activity:

- emotional and visual comprehension of the set of professional practices;
- intellectual-conative sense-making vocational self-development;
- combinations of socially-significant meanings of human vital activities;
- combinations of vocationally-significant meanings of a personal identity in the selected kind of activity.

Thus, in the context of the implementation of the model of readiness of future educational psychologists for sense-making professional engagement, we can assume the interrelation of the criteria of the intellectual-conative sense-making vocational self-development. A high level of self-regulation and individual characteristics of goal-setting and retention of goals means that students will be satisfied with the quality and the content of self-organization, which contributes to the readiness of students for their professional engagement.

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