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Anastasia V. Zavorokhina

Student at the Faculty of Pedagogy, Psychology and Communicative Studies

Kuban State University

Russia, Krasnodar

Yana U. Chernomurova

Student at the Faculty of Pedagogy, Psychology and Communicative Studies

Kuban State University

Russia, Krasnodar

Tatiana V. Volkodav

Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of English Philology and

the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology

Kuban State University

Russia, Krasnodar

STUDENTS VS TEACHER: THROUGH THE IMAGE LOOKING GLASS

Abstract:

The article is devoted to the peculiarities of student's perception and assessment of the image of the faculty member. The paper examines the main characteristics of the teacher's personality, as well as the dynamics of changes in the components of the educator's image throughout the entire study period. The results of the study showed that university students tend to change their beliefs about the image of the teacher.

Keywords: *image of the teacher, professional qualities, teacher's personal qualities, teacher image indicators, pedagogical process.*

Introduction

The image of the teacher has become a necessary attribute of professional activity in the modern society. On the one hand, image encourages personal promotion and success in the professional activity. On the other hand, it stimulates personal self-fulfillment through recognition by the society and personal success. The importance of teacher image is determined by certain factors, e.g., the necessity to compete in the modern educational environment; the opportunity for self-realization and success; the importance of teacher's image for the organization's effective educational process.

Students' beliefs about the teacher's personality function as an important subjective factor that determines the effectiveness of the entire educational work of the University [8, c. 110-117]. Furthermore, this factor affects the teacher's communication with students, including various classroom and extracurricular activities. The problem of teacher's image and its role require special consideration, as the development of methods of its diagnosis will stimulate the transformation of teacher image into a full-fledged factor of the pedagogical process [1, c. 61-68]. The importance of students' perceptions of the teacher has been indicated by many modern researchers in the field of interpersonal relations, noting the influence of various parameters and components of these views on the effectiveness of the educational process [2, c. 136-148].

Current research

The purpose of our study was to identify the features of the students' perception of the teacher's personality using “*The Characteristics of an Ideal Teacher*” questionnaire [5, c. 123-133]. The survey involved N=72 respondents (35 first-year students and 37 final-year students) aged from 18 to 23 years old. The participants were instructed to assess the significance of the qualities presented in the list on the proposed scale. Furthermore, the questionnaire was

aimed to assess the dynamics of teacher image indicators at different stages of training.

Results and discussion

The data analysis (Table 1) shows that although many indicators are interconnected, 42% of the respondents highly value *'methods for presenting the material'* (e.g., an interactive/communicative approach); 21% of the respondents ranked *'personal qualities of the teacher'* (e.g., commitment, persistence, communicability) higher than *'professional qualities of the teacher'* (i.e., skills, competencies). *'Cooperation with the audience'* was the fourth most important ranking factor (11%), followed by *'the teacher's appearance'* (5%) and *'the teacher's social behavior'* (4%).

Table 1. "The Characteristics of an Ideal Teacher"

Scales	First-year students	Final-year students	Total
Methods for presenting the material	40%	43%	42%
Professional qualities	14%	19%	17%
Teacher's social behavior	6%	3%	4%
Personal qualities	28%	13,5%	21%
Cooperation with the audience	9%	13,5%	11%
Teacher's appearance	3%	8%	5%

The next stage of the study was to measure the dynamics of the components of the teacher's image in students' assessments at different stages of training.

The scales with polar definitions of teacher's qualities include:

- teacher's ability to increase students' interest in a subject / teacher's inability to increase students' interest in a subject;
- teacher's perfect / imperfect knowledge on the part of the subject;

- teacher's interest in the development of professional and personal qualities of students / teacher's interaction with the participants of the educational process only within the framework of educational activities;
- 'brightness' of the teacher / 'mediocrity' of the teacher;
- teacher's focus on cooperation / teacher's focus on authoritarian practices;
- teacher's stylish appearance / teacher's typical appearance.

As we were interested in the dynamics of students' perception of the educator's image, we compared the average values of the study groups. The results obtained have revealed that both first-year and final-year students have similar ideas and beliefs about the professional competence of the teacher. The respondents are likely to attach more importance to the methods for presenting the educational material, as well as to the ability of the teacher to effectively transmit knowledge to the student.

According to the first-year students, personal qualities of the teacher are of primary importance, whereas professional characteristics of the teacher are gaining in importance in the final year of university, because teachers are perceived as representatives of a certain professional field. Personality characteristics are no longer considered vital for the fourth-year students, since they are already familiar with many teachers and educational activities.

Low ranks of '*teacher's cooperation with the audience*' showed that first-year students consider this factor as less significant. They have already formed an attitude to the teachers, evaluation criteria, etc. Traditionally the students' opinions are formed on the basis of psychological characteristics of the teacher's personality (e.g., emotional stability, brightness, empathy, sociability).

The final-year students tend to cooperate with the teacher in a professional context. Students value and appreciate the teacher who respects their personality and their opinions. In addition, the respondents have a negative

attitude to the teacher who focuses on authoritarian practices. Consequently, the teacher's authoritarian style automatically falls into the group of negative characteristics.

The teacher's appearance is not a determining factor affecting the students' assessment of the teacher, as the indicator is found in the lower ranks. The dynamics of attitude to appearance is noticeable in students of the final year of education. In general, senior students are more demanding; they appreciate the teacher's ability to inspire interest in the subject, the teacher's focus on cooperation and interaction, modern methods of presenting the material and educator's communication skills.

Conclusion

Thus, the students of each course have arranged the indicators of the teacher's image in order of increasing or decreasing importance. The most dynamic settings include such image characteristics that affect the assessment of teacher's professional efficiency as '*methods of presenting the material*', '*personal qualities*' and '*cooperation with the audience*'.

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