

Transgressive Processes in Russian Higher Education

¹R.M. Abdulgalimov, ²K.S. Aybatyrov, ³N.A. Kulibekov,

³A.N. Magomedova, ⁴I.E. Panova and ⁴L.N. Kharchenko

¹Dagestan State Medical Academy Lenin Square, 1,

²Dagestan State Agrarian University Magomed Gadzhiev Street, 180,

³Dagestan State Pedagogical University Yaragskiy Street, 57, Makhachkala, Dagestan, Russia

⁴North-Caucasus Federal University, Pushkin Street, 1, Stavropol, Russia

Abstract: The study presents and proves the researchers viewpoint on phenomena and processes which take place in the praxis of the Russian higher education. The study notes that the development of the system of higher education presents the breakaway from the culturological orientation of education. The authors call this phenomenon “the transgression of culturological approach”; it develops extremely fast, since the Russian state system of social and economic management is characterised by the so-called direct management. Etatism is the ubiquitous presence and influence of the state, it is the characteristic feature of Russia. The result of transgression of culturological approach in the praxis of the higher education is the innovative integrated culture of a specialist (or a future specialist) which in researchers opinion is very promising due to its creative element. The study contains the researchers interpretations of definitions of the following concepts: transgression, culturological approach, etatism, innovative integrated culture.

Key words: Transgression, culturological approach, etatism, innovative integrated culture, praxis

INTRODUCTION

The study of this problem is connected with the fact that the transgressive phenomena of the system of higher education change significantly the main components of educational process (aims, forms, techniques, means, content) as well as interests and which is more important, the main roles of all the subjects of education. These changes are to our mind, inevitable (and necessary), since from the theoretical point of view education is an open system where not only the socialization takes place but the systems of different levels and the process of replication interacts (Latin replicare, reflect, the creation of the structure similar to oneself, self-reference in other words autoreproduction, reduplication of the social culture).

It is obvious that the interaction of education with other social institutions of the state and society always has two sides, consequently, the education response on their dynamics by means of behind-time changing its structure or content. Durkheim (2007) paid attention to this circumstance. He noted that there exist a lot of examples of the fact the the development of education significantly falls behind from the development of society in general (Durkheim, 2007). Such a lag is only one of displays of the so-called cultural lag theory the concept

which has been introduced by Ogborn and is applicable to the development of education. Though, at the same time it can be that new ideas can be spread in the society without touching orientations and methods of education system.

For instance, Coleman points out that the state of education in the most developed states cannot solve a range of problems such as: providing of its correspondence to the labour market; congruity of cultures of ethnic majority and minority; full development of individual skills; overcoming of stratifying influence on the students; development of mass environmental conscience. Even the education systems of the “rich” states fall behind the needs of development and retard it in their own way.

In the basis of the lag mechanism lay not so much economic factors as the contradictions between the dynamics of the culture and the system of education management. The root of this contradiction is the lag and superstition of management culture which an element of the general culture of the mankind (Giddens, 2001). Coombs (1985) called this phenomenon the educational crisis.

While trying to neutralize the above mentioned contradiction the system of the Russian education suffers continuous “reforms”, “modernisations”, “innovations”,

“diversifications” which do not improve the situation but deform the culturological orientation of education. We define these processes as transgressive ones. We will speak of these processes in the given study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The results of the investigation which comprise the content of this study was acquired on the basis of usage of theoretical methods of investigation of social-pedagogic phenomena and processes such as analysis (notional separating for constituent elements of social-pedagogic phenomena and processes which take place in the higher education for the purpose of their detailed study and defining of their qualities). We analysed the available (such that exist in scientific literature, normative acts, statistic reviews, the internet) data about the condition of the Russian higher education system. We also analysed the long scientific-pedagogic subjective experience of the researchers; comparison (defining similarities and differences between phenomena and processes which take place in different organisations of higher education or between their individual features, defining differences in similar items and similarities in different items); synthesis (theoretical method of investigation, it allowed combining the acquired data in such a way that one can get the whole knowledge which is new in the form of transgression of culturological approach); generalisation (this method was used during the finishing stage of investigation for the purpose of generalisation of the acquired results and formulation of reports and conclusions).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Body: The thinking of the concept of a higher educational establishment and higher education from the viewpoint of classical views (Ortega, 1972; Jaspers, 1958; Habermas, 1971; Readings, 1996) showed that their functions were the that of reproduction of education, science, culture which taken together was the culturological approach. The processes which take place in the Russian higher education now change these functions, i.e., we can see the “transgression of culturological approach”. Let us try to prove, the researchers viewpoint on this question and reveal the sense on this concept.

In philosophic literature, the transgression is represented as one of the key concepts of post-modernism which “fixes the phenomenon of transference of the impassable border and first of all between the possible and the impossible, “transgression” is the movement oriented to the borderline” (Mozheiko, 2003).

Transgression (Latin trans-through and gressus-approach, overcome) is understood as “the situation of achieving by the subject of the outer position relating to anything in the process of crossing borderlines and movement beyond them” (Mozheiko, 2003). In other sources transgression is “the transcendence, break through”, “the strategy of transcendence of the above shown”.

For our investigation that fact is interesting that the concept of transgression, in the investigators’ opinion, “implicitly has in its content the ideas which fix (though descriptively) the same mechanisms of nonlinear evolution which are fixed by synergetics in explicit form” (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984). First of all we speak about the possibility of formation of the brand new (i.e., not determined by the existing state of the system) evolutionary prospects. The essential moment of the transgressive act is the fact that it violates the linearity of the process: transgression “means that which is radically is out the orientation”. In this regard, the concept of transgression breaks through the presumption of linear succession” (Mozheiko, 2003).

The new (developing) horizon of the evolution of higher education system, opening with a transgressive breakthrough is brand new in the sense that it is not a linear consequent in relation to the previous (functioning) state. On the contrary, the novelty in this case has the status of the denying energy towards everything which was previously: the horizon which is opened in the act of transgression from the viewpoint of Blansho (2002) is “the possibility which appears after the implementation of all the possible possibilities which eliminates all the previous or removes it. Moreover, postmodernism connects the act of transgressive transfer with the figure of “crossing” different versions of evolution which can be evaluated as the analogue of bifurcational branching” (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984).

In this reference system, Batai calls the phenomenon of transgression the “edge of the possible”, “meditation”, “great experience” which “does not pay attention to the borders, established from beyond” quotation according to Timofeeva (2009).

Interesting is the interpretation of the term “transgression” from the viewpoint of diastrophic processes in the Earth’s crust. In this case, the transgression is understood as “the progradation of the sea water onto the shore in the result of lowering of the Earth’s crust under the influence of descending diastrophic movements or rarely the raise of the level of the World’s water”.

Basing on the viewpoints stated in different sources, we have formulated the researchers definition of the concept of transgression in the context of our investigation.

The transgression of the culturological approach in the praxis of higher education is the process which takes place in modern higher educational establishments as the open systems under the influence of split-level (global, regional such that take place inside a higher educational establishment, personal) and multidirectional (dealing with content, forms, methods of education, material and financial support) social-economic, ideological, political fluctuations which are characterised by moving of the worldview affirmations beyond the borders of traditional ideas of a higher educational establishment and results of education in it, this leads to the appearing of the new (yet not actually defined) prospect in the preparation of highly qualified specialists.

The transgression of culturological approach ironically can be defined as “bending” of the Russian higher education under the stereotypes and standards of foreign education systems which (we pay a special attention to this fact) are also in dynamical (consequently in indefinite) state which is conditioned by the above mentioned tendency lag of educational systems from the civilizational processes.

Transgression (bending) of the culturological approach in the praxis of higher education is quite dynamic, since on the modern stage of the Russian education development the phenomenon of “etatization” is strongly displayed. It is defined as follows

- Orientation of the social thinking which consider the state as the highest result and aim of the social development
- Concept and ideology which is based on the acceptance of the primacy of the state over the society and nation and is justified the necessity of active intervention
- Sociological theory which proves the necessity of active intervention of the state into the economic and political life of the society
- Policy of the active participation of the state in economic life of the society (Tarabanovskaya, 2010).

According to the laws of synergetics the hybrid society which is the Russian society could exist only if it had a strong centralised government. That’s why in the Russian system of education management the level of centralised state government was always higher and the state performed more social functions than in other countries.

The example of the influence of the state on the system of higher education in Russia is the

implementation of the national project “Education” within the framework of which the innovative programmes of higher educational establishments are supported; it demonstrates the direct influence (first of all the financial one) of the state on the system of higher education which orients to the pointing out (on the basis of disputable criteria and subjective assessment of innovative programmes) of several dozens of the leading higher educational establishments which are to join the ranks of the best world’s universities by 2020 (which is also disputable). It is supposed that the new national model of the higher educational establishment which satisfies the demands of the second half of the XXI century will be formed and developed on the basis of these higher educational establishments’ activity.

The implementation of the total action “Effective higher educational establishment” is another display of etatism. It is possible that in such a way the state tries, though not very effectively to bring back the past glory of the Russian education, including the higher one. But, the attempts of bringing back the higher education onto the way of culturological approach only by means of administrative measures without the profound system changes (which deal with the functions of the higher school in the society, its connection and interaction with other institutions, super-tasks of its activity, real ideas and concepts of students, teachers, researchers, managers) lead only to the appearing of additional “layer” of falsification and simulation. This is the simulation of reforms, simulation of development management: “the administrators simulate their modernisation management, the teachers simulate that they modernise the investigating and educational process and so on”. There appear new types of higher educational establishments (research, innovative, federal), there appear different “fashionable” innovations for example, grade-rating systems, quality management, etc. which often result in appearing of additional orders, records and so without influencing the real quality of educational results.

It should be noted that the actual praxis of the higher education is to a greater degree oriented to the values of civilization, satisfying the demands of social, scientific and technical progress which also leads to the transgression of culturological approach. There appears a tendency of substitution of culturological values of the higher education by civilizational ones, pragmatic, practical orientation of this cultural form, elimination of its real culturological senses and values. This means that the main energy and resources of the educational sphere are to solve tactical, pragmatic-practical tasks in the prejudice

of strategic, cultural tasks which contribute not only to the “survival” but to the development of the society and personality.

That’s why, the substitution of humanistic dyadic model with functionalistic (or competence-based) one which aims the institution of the higher education for the preparation of a specialist, operator of certain industrial or administrative systems can be considered as the display of transgression of culturological approach in the praxis of higher education. The competence-based model prepares a human for a certain place in the functional structure of industrial or social systems and is correspondingly considered as one of its elements.

The process of transgression of culturological approach in the praxis of higher education, according to synergetic views is performed through the integration of “coming” into the “existing”. In this regard, the professional culture of higher educational establishments is filled with new knowledge, competences, values and is transformed into the innovative integrated culture of a specialist.

The integrated innovative culture is a characteristic feature of a specialist (future specialist), conceptual core of a new competence of education which displays the level of integration development of education, science and industry in the context of project management of innovative processes.

Innovative integrated culture is the complex social phenomenon which combines modern culture, education, science, innovations, industry and management. The integration that condition the process of culture genesis leads to the addition of new elements, improving, interpenetration and mutual enrichment of all the constituent parts and different connections of the whole education-innovative integrated culture of the future specialist.

Report: Thus, the transgression of culturological approach in the praxis of higher education leads to the change of emphasis: from the formation of values, senses and relations from the priority of personality development of the future specialist to the predominance of technological, social-political and other utilitarian components in the content preparation of specialists in higher educational establishments which speaks for the false expression of culturological component of educational process. There takes place the change of ideologies of the Russian higher education, the replacement of culturological model of education with the competence-based one.

CONCLUSION

Post-modern concept of transgression which is applied to the evolution of the praxis of higher education is not the exotic abstract construction but it expresses the inner mechanism of evolution process which has not been yet fixed by traditional thinking (Anonymous, 2009). Similar to the process of synergetic reflection’s fixation of “our being on the way to the new synthesis, new concept of the nature” (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984), we can suppose that the transgression of culturological approach in the praxis of the Russian higher education is the result of system’s search of the way out the existing crisis situation. There is no doubt that this search leads the system of higher education to the new concept and ideology of preparation of specialists in higher educational establishments.

Innovative integrated culture of higher educational establishment, chair, graduate which is formed in the result of transgression of culturological approach is characteristic for higher education of the transitional period (Eribon, 2008), taking into account all the uncertainties of the prospect of its establishment, it is the source of the further creative processes and non-linear development.

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