

УДК 37.012.1: 165.18

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### CATEGORY OF EXPERIENCE AND PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITY

*Стаття присвячена аналізу досвіду, можливості його збереження і передачі наступним поколінням в цілому і в педагогічній діяльності. Розглядаються сутнісні характеристики досвіду, встановлюються точки дотику досвіду і знання. Рефлексія над досвідом дає можливість зробити його повідомленням, адресованим іншим. Але тільки звернення до форм спілкування на рівні досвіду гарантує, що досвід може бути переданий без істотних втрат.*

**Ключові слова:** *досвід, знання, повідомлення, рефлексія, спілкування, співробітництво, педагогічна діяльність, взаємодія, освіта.*

*Статья посвящена анализу опыта, возможности его сохранения и передачи последующим поколениям в целом и педагогической деятельности, в частности. Рассматриваются существенные характеристики опыта, устанавливаются точки соприкосновения опыта и знания. Рефлексия над опытом дает возможность сделать его сообщением, адресованным другим. Но только обращение к формам общения на уровне опыта гарантирует, что опыт может быть передан без существенных потерь.*

**Ключевые слова:** *опыт, знание, сообщение, рефлексия, общение, сотрудничество, педагогическая деятельность, взаимодействие, образование.*

*This article is dedicated to the analysis of experience, possibility of its retention and transfer to subsequent generations in general and to pedagogical activity in particular. The essential characteristics of experience are examined and the common ground of experience and knowledge is established. Reflection on experience gives a possibility to make it a message addressed to others. But only turning to the forms of communication at the level of experience guarantees that experience can be transmitted without essential losses.*

**Keywords:** *experience, knowledge, communication, message, reflection, collaboration, pedagogical activity, interaction, education.*

The category of experience is not widely developed and traditional for the pedagogical science, but, in spite of this, it is used throughout the pedagogical theory and practice and is its basic concept.

According to L. Feuerbach [1: 79], a man needs experience as much as he/she needs air; however, insufficient attention of teachers to the category of experience can be strongly felt nowadays. In the pedagogical science, there is a growing interest in the phenomenon of experi-

ence due to modernization of education, change of educational paradigm, strengthening of the anthropocentric and person-centred strategies as well as of the competency building approach the basis of which lies in personal experience.

Didactic rules of the pedagogical science can be useful, but at large, they do not determine the success of a teacher's activity. Rules and laws give knowledge that can serve as a guiding thread. They are useful only if fortified by practical skills, experience. Experience cannot be replaced by knowledge. A young teacher may be armed with a lot of truths and judgments that are quite sober and indicate his/her erudition and education; however, his/her experience might prove to be rather poor. Because of their universality and communication, many pedagogical truths (knowledge) become quite an "easy prey" for students.

Consequently, the paramount task of education is the establishment of common ground between abstract knowledge and experience. The question under discussion is both the teacher's experience and individual experience of a student. In other words, the problem consists in how to make the content of the teacher's experience available to a student as well as how to activate and enrich the experience of a student. In the development of a man, the way how people recognize and actualize their life experience and integrate the experience of human achievements into it is of decisive importance. Eventually, the essence of pedagogical interaction is not so much in the transmission of information in the chain elder – younger, teacher – student, as in the exchange of experience and its use for the mastery of the new frontiers.

The methodological basis for our study of experience is the general philosophical concept of experience in relation to the cognoscibility of the world, the unity of the direct and indirect knowledge in the structure of experience, the aspect of socio-cultural conditionality of life experience, its dependence on the practice of an individual, and building up experience in the course of the entire life of a man.

The concept "experience" in the system of philosophical knowledge has a long history. In the history of philosophy, two tendencies in the understanding of experience are clearly distinguished. The first pervades by itself all periods of history, from the antiquity up to now, and is reduced to the understanding of experience as a totality of sensual data and impressions, which an individual obtains with the help of the sense organs. The second was defined later in connection with the development of natural sciences and was expressed in the treatment of experience as experiment, i.e. a special procedure in the composition of scientific cognition.

Both tendencies specified are in complete agreement with each other, since they arose within the framework of gnosiology and equally perceive the cognitive content in experience. In this case, it is important to point out the main fact that experience is considered as a subjective and unique synthesis of abilities, skills, empirical knowledge and estimations, impressions, feelings and other acts of the vital activity of a man. Experience is examined within the framework of the human method of existence, in the unity of its active and practical, socially-historical and individual characteristics. This makes it possible to examine experience as a special subjective form of the mastery of the world the defining property of which is the ability to assimilate the phenomena of existence as the facts of vital activity. The philosophical and methodological approach makes it possible to reveal in the experience the action of a certain universal mechanism, which determines by itself the entire massifs of human existence and on which some productive forms of spiritual culture including the skill of pedagogical activity are based.

Realization of the invaluable role of experience in pedagogy is not new. Relying on the ideas of sensualism, J.A. Komensky [2:34] formulates the "golden rule" of didactics the essence of which consisted in triggering all sensory organs during perception of the object of study. Thus, instruction built on sensual cognition creates the necessary experience.

Jean Jacques Rousseau [3:285] believed that successful upbringing and education is built on the basis of a student's personal experience. These ideas were supported by L. N. Tolstoy [4] who asserted experience as the only method of education. J. Dewey made a serious contribution to education through experience [5:18.]. The theory of experience is the base of his philosophy of education. The enrichment of experience is a task more important than the communication of knowledge.

The history of humanity testifies that the experienced form of the mastery of the world and mastery of cultural values historically preceded the appearance of specialized production and propagation of knowledge. Experience is syncretical by nature and is directly connected with the vital activity of a man and the common sense, which completely answered the level of development of the early societies and their traditional structure. At that stage, people were acquiring knowledge through the example of experience which represented by itself the trial-and-error method. Experience does not provide for the development and availability of a special set of instruments and methodologies. Cognition had not yet acquired the specialized form of science, and experience was represented as a preferred method of synthesis of knowledge and accumulation of spiritual achievements, which were fused into unique education that was named wisdom. Wisdom covered all spheres of vital activity and melted the events of the past into spiritual experience, which concentrated in it the effective lessons for the future. It is not by chance that not just regular individuals having outstanding intellectual abilities but old men who had a long and eventful life under their belt were regarded as the carriers of wisdom (wise men). By nature, wisdom was not the sum of information; it was something directly merged with a living personality personifying the succession of generations. Because of this property, wisdom, instead of the ready-made truths, gave/taught the lessons of correct actions. Wisdom is convincing without proofs. In wisdom, the human experience is freed from the random and is compressed representing the example to be followed. Based predominantly on the individual memory, wisdom was a syncretic treasury of collective experience, which had fundamental importance for the transfer of this experience to subsequent generations. These special features of wisdom have their merits; however, they narrow the area of its propagation to the sphere of personal contacts. In the event of death of a wise man, the experience the carrier of which he was, was lost forever. Usually, these losses proved to be irreplaceable becoming an obstacle in the development of the society. This state of affairs actualizes the question about the possibility not only of the direct contact at the level of experience, but also about the possibility of adequate mastering by subsequent generations of the experience of their predecessors, who have already exited the historical scene.

For more fundamental understanding of the category "experience", it is necessary to examine its essential characteristics. We do not assign ourselves a task to examine the complete spectrum of the characteristics of experience, but just to isolate only those aspects, which will help us answer the question whether a possibility of the transfer of experience exists, whether it is possible to translate it to the language of concepts and present it in the form of knowledge.

Is it possible to find common ground between such disparate forms of mastery of the reality as knowledge and experience?

In fact, experience is unique, individual and inimitable. While knowledge, especially in its scientific form, is depersonalized and in the form of universality and need expresses the objective connection of things. Knowledge is connected with obtaining of the objective truth independent from the cognizer. Knowledge implies "purification" from everything that is subjective, external, unessential, untypical, and random. Knowledge, for instance, implies diverting from specific aspects of a phenomenon by using an abstraction. Idealization is connected with the rejection of everything that disrupts "the cleanliness" of a phenomenon. All this specifies the fact that knowledge appears in the objective form and is given as a totality of definitions of what is known, while experience is the indissoluble and component part of the subject. Experience is connected not only with the general, but also with the unique, not only with the universal, but also with the individual, and it is oriented for the retention of all moments of vital activity in the unique combination of the random and the necessary, external and internal that is characteristic of it.

Knowledge is inseparably connected with reflection and implies systematization, sequence and conclusiveness. Experience is not reflexive. Not in the sense that it cannot be subjected to reflection, but in the fact that the function of experience, in which its authentic specific character is concentrated, does not need it. Experience would lose its specific merits should it constantly undergo reflection and reduction to the forms of knowledge. Experience, first of all, is a certain totality of the vital activity in which the subject participated and which he survived by all its essence. Experience personifies something that has unconditionally taken place and is actually reliable and does not require any proofs, as well as cannot be disproved. Experience is organically poured with the acting subject. It is for this very reason that the question about the truth or falsity of experience is deprived of sense. Experience can be enriched, depreciated or can undergo comparative estimation, but in any case it remains a quintessence of specific actions, their real lesson. In this sense, it would be more correctly to speak about the positive or negative experience. It is most visibly revealed when unsuccessful activity leaves positive experience in the sense of instructive examples for the future. Experience functions as the arsenal of the accumulated capabilities for the subsequent effective action and reports subjective confidence to all human undertakings. The aforesaid does not, however, mean that the difference between experience and knowledge stretches so far that the gaps between them cannot be bridged and common ground cannot be established.

The first observation concerns the fact that the subject simultaneously is the carrier of experience and the possessor of knowledge. Experience and knowledge cannot but be adjoined, since they result from the general categorial structure of human activity. The only difference lies in the fact that knowledge handles categories as the elements of thinking, while in experience the essence is revealed through subjective participation. What is formulated in knowledge in the form of generalizations and laws is exercised in experience in the form of the algorithms of activity, which in reality is nothing but demonstration of universality and regularity. Therefore, experience is associated with the eternally green tree of life, while intelligible substances of science seem faceless and dry.

Secondly, the subject certainly cannot make its experience universal. But it can convert it into the object of universal communicability. The universal communicability of experience is

the important feature of its retention and translation. Experience can be made communicable by virtue of language as one of the universal and intersubjective means of significant materialization of the universal. In language, the universal content of experience is reserved in the form of categorial forms. Concepts and categories deprive experience of individuality, uniqueness, authorship and subjective colouring, but give a possibility to transfer it via language channels. It should be emphasized here that knowledge is not identical to experience. Reflection over experience and its conceptual explication allows making it a communication addressed to others rather than revealing the entire wealth of its content. In this case, the analogy with the art of tea ceremony is appropriate (茶の湯). In all paradoxicality of such comparison, it is instructive parallel that is laid in it. As it is known, a tea ceremony has rather hard and fast rules; at the same time, knowing said rules does not guarantee the understanding of this art. A well-known Japanese parable describes this situation as follows. When the 16<sup>th</sup> century tea ceremony master Sen no Rikyu was asked a question whether it was true that in the tea ceremony there were secrets and complex rules, he answered: "There is no any secret whatsoever. They simply make and drink tea according to the known rules". "Then I know how to make it", exclaimed the interlocutor. The experienced master replied to that: "If there is a man who knows how to make it, I am ready to become his student". Experience is always much richer and more meaningful than what they know and say about it. By paraphrasing F. M. Dostoyevsky, it is possible to say that in experience there is something that cannot be transmitted to other people in any possible way even if one has written volumes about it and has been telling about his/her experience for thirty-five years in a row. In experience something will always remain unclear and undisclosed [6: 323]. Knowledge with its categorial tools, no matter how sophisticated and precise they are, cannot exhaust the entire wealth of experience. Experience is not just an object, something that is made and represented externally; it is also its motives and the very matter of the subject that is not separated from its being. Therefore, it can be confidently said that the analytical approach to experience and strivings of the human brain to conceptually design it, will never be comprehensive, but the main thing – it will never become the adequate method of transferring and mastering of experience.

Thirdly, if communication of experience has its problems and limits, which are defined by the specific character of cognitive activity and rationality as such, turning to the direct forms of contact at the level of experience gives grounds to assume that the integrity of experience can be transmitted without essential losses. The communicative situation, in fact, differs from cognition and functioning of knowledge by the fact that this is subject – subject, not subject – object relation. The specific character of subject – subject relations lies in the fact that it is a dialogue connection, where consideration of the subjectivity of both parties is of fundamental significance for mutual understanding. In this case, the discussion deals with such a method of communication when the process of shaping of experience (activity) becomes, at the same time, the method of its transfer. The involvement of subjects with each other in the activity offers a possibility to penetrate into the other's integral experience. Collective collaboration of subjects within the framework of a unified matter (inclusion) makes it possible for each subject to open in the activity of others the entire complex of semantic connections, spiritual pulses, ideas and motivations which are correlated with their own by means known to everyone. This is how the effect of one subject's presence in the activity of another is achieved. Because of collaboration through participation, mutual identification in experience, reproduction of the struc-

ture of somebody else's experience in its own vital activity becomes possible. Communication by virtue of experience has a special important feature that it can transmit the content of experience that is not recognized and cannot be recognized by its subject. M. Polani demonstrated this special feature of experience on the example of the English system of justice established on precedent [7:88.]. The system of precedent is based on a persuasion characteristic of any traditionalism that practical wisdom is personified in the matters rather than in written rules. According to that, the common law concedes that a judge may erroneously interpret his actions. The legal maxim "doctrina dictum" implies that a precedent is established by the court's ruling independently of the interpretations that may be contained in the commentaries ("obiter dicta") of the judge, who made that ruling. Thus, the judge's actions are considered as something more reliable than his interpretation of his own actions.

This example quite well illustrates the fact that society as a whole and people in general do understand well the difference between the information about experience and experience as such. Even when this information is provided by the very possessor of experience, we unavoidably face inferiority, distortions and sometimes misinterpretation thereof. The reflection of the subject in relation to its experience separates experience from the activity that formed it and transfers it into the conceptual form. This transition into rational comprehension and understanding of experience may subjectively seem to be its deepening and development. Although, in reality it is the enrichment of self-consciousness and not of experience that occurs in this case. This can be explained by the fact that for the subject reflecting about his/her own experience the losses related to the transfer of the latter into the conceptual language of knowledge remain imperceptible, since he/she continues having experience in the primary, active form. But for those, who obtain information about experience, the active component of experience is absent and they not deal with the experience itself but with its virtual idea. For this very reason, people attempt to enrich their experience not only at the expense of stories, even the most reliable ones, so to say straight from the source, but by the presence on the spot of events, participation in the matter.

A well known example of communication as participation in and inclusion into experience is the interrelation of a master and a student, an apprentice. A student follows the master and does everything the master does. At this moment, the question of why this is so and not otherwise is meaningless, since very often the teacher him/herself does not know the answer. By observing the master and repeating his/her actions, a student becomes a living co-communicant to the world that serves as the source and base of experience. To master craftsmanship and to adopt experience is possible only by virtue of subjective identification in the sphere of the master's activity. On top of that, medieval craftsmen surrounded this interaction by symbolic and ritual actions, which were aimed at emphasizing the mysteriousness of what was going on and the unique value of the opening experience. But, as in the old days and today the penetration into experience this not a blind, mechanical repetition of what was seen; it requires co-authorship and is achieved via reconstruction of its own activity and formation of its own subjectivity. Understanding and succession of experience requires the subject to reproduce the patterns of the activity of others on the basis of his/her own activity. Thus, it can be said that inclusion into experience implies free creation in the form of collective creative work and mutual anxiety. The subject must repeat the basic phases of the reconstructed process; moreover, he/she must pass, i.e. survive them in his/her own vital activity, rather than be limited to recognition, obtaining of

information. Of course, this process can be interpreted as acquisition of knowledge; however, and what is most important, for the individual this is the way of formation of his/her own subjectivity. Like a child in a game is introduced to the world and experience of adults, does the subject enter the world created by others owing to the joint activity, independent activity and inclusion, borrows their experience, but does not lose him/herself.

These methodological considerations are of the universal nature; however, in the field of education and training of teachers they have fundamental value. As a result of a larger degree of orientation to the objectively thematic interrelations, fundamental sciences have a tendency to rationalize, being converted into the scientific system of knowledge and the technology based on it. While for pedagogy, experimental mastery is of extremely important significance, since it coincides with the direct vital process and cannot be narrowed down to knowledge or simple understanding. This does not mean that the succession of experience and knowledge is accomplished in the nonintersecting fields. Quite the opposite, the rational content of experience can be transferred into the conceptual form, into the plan of knowledge. From the other side, the content of knowledge used as a subjective potential of activity is capable of entering into the composition of experience and enrich it.

The central objective of pedagogical education consists not so many in arming the students with the sum of knowledge, but in teaching them to act "expertly" and use this knowledge in their activity, to qualitatively and effectively fulfil their professional pedagogical duties. Pragmaticality, which implies that the teacher participates in the practical work, is the most important special feature of pedagogical education.

In the works on traditional pedagogy up to the 70's of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such words as "transfer", "armament", "explanation" and similar to them were most frequently encountered in the pedagogical theories showing that a student was perceived as a passive object of the teacher's external action. With this knowledge-oriented approach to the content of education, in the centre of the teacher's attention there is knowledge, which comes out as an absolute value and shields the student with his/her personal and individual properties. New concepts and methods of innovative education require a fundamentally new qualification of teachers. The teacher's estrangement from the training process, which happened to be the case until recently, is replaced by the skill to work together. Therefore, teachers attempt to find ways by transferring the centre of gravity from the frontal forms of work to individual and group forms of work. In the course of joint activity, an increase in the significance of the personal factor occurs at which a student becomes the subject of his/her development. In the situation of joint activity, a student is obligated to take into account his/her actions and the actions of the teacher, to discuss them, to defend his/her point of view in relation to one or another question; only this condition makes the "interiorization" of knowledge and experience possible alongside their transformation into the student's own personally significant knowledge and experience. Building up independence, responsibility and experience, developing the skill of collaboration are understood as the leading value and the purpose of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is clear that with the aid of the reproductive methods of instruction it is difficult to transmit experience and even more difficult to build it up.

In the process of collaboration, the dynamic conversion of role relations (of both teachers and students) takes place. Such interaction creates the zone of proximal development, sets in motion the internal processes of development, which in the beginning are possible for a student

only in the course of interaction with the instructor and collaboration with other students. The instructor's role consists in the fact that he/she organizes the activity of students according to the assigned activity patterns in order to open before students such their sides and those regularities, which must be mastered. However, gradually these processes become the internal property of a student him/herself.

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