TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORKS

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Abstract: *In the article the possibilities of creation of networks which provide teachers' professional development and instruments for creation of informative educational environment are selected on the basis of scientific works' analysis. Teachers' professional development networks can be provided by special instruments and services. Possibilities of special platforms, instruments and services are generalized for creation of professional networks: e-mails, webinars, sites, blogs, forums, wiki resources, social networks, special platforms.*
Keywords: professional development; networks; online communities; informational communicative technologies.

INTRODUCTION

In January 2012 the Law of Ukraine "About professional development of workers", which determines legal, organizational and financial functioning principles of the system of workers' professional development was accepted, and in November 2011 the National scope of qualifications according to the Act of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine in order to introduce European standards and principles of quality of education, assistance to international acknowledgement of national qualifications, obtained in Ukraine, adjusting effective cooperation sphere of educational services at the labor market. Professional development is carried out in society in the conditions of continuous professional education which covers professional education at school, colleges, universities and post-graduate establishments, and in the conditions of production. At the same time professional development takes place in the process of professional studies and self-education, professional development of a personality.

Specialists determine several directions to modeling professional development and personality formation (O. Anisimov, L. Antsiferova, O. Bolotova, A. Derkatch, N. Kuzmina, E. Zeer, S. Maksimenko, A. Markova, L. Mitina, N. Povyakel, V. Semichenko and others). Among them: adaptive approach, where a tendency of the submission of professional labour to the external circumstances as implementation of algorithms of case studies, rules and norms prevails; professional development approach, which is characterized by the ability to leave the practice of conversion of activities and as a result to overcome restrictions of professional abilities.

Nowadays scientific searches are oriented to the pedagogical approach of studies of professional networks, virtual communities which is represented in works of the

following authors: V. Bikova, M. Zhaldaka, N. Zadorozhnaya, S. Litvinova, V. Kukharenko, N. Morse, S. Sisoeva (Ukraine), O. Andreev, E. Patarakin, E. Polat, A. Hutorskiy (Russia), Ñ. Virkus (Great Britain), D. Bouden (USA) and others.

But the use of professional networks and virtual communities for teachers' professional development hasn't been studied enough, so we'll expose possibilities of introduction of professional development approach by means of professional networks' creation on the basis of the ICT usage with the help of generalization of existing instruments for creation of teachers' professional networks and determination of perspectives of professional networks' introduction for teachers' professional development.

S. Litvinova in her research [3, p.40] emphasizes possibilities of the usage of virtual subject communities (associations of teachers which have general interests, aspirations and aims, actively communicate with each other on both professional and on nonprofessional topics). S. Litvinova determines distinctive features of virtual subject communities: absence of both psychological and geographical barriers of communication; interactive character of members, which can effectively exchange useful and interesting information; possibility of self-presentation and self-realization of teachers; an informal structure of online communication; structured bank of methodological materials.

Realization of professional community online is provided by creation of the proper informative infrastructure, organization of collaboration among teachers, materials' exchange, common creation of new knowledge. Communication as a type of activity in a network community can be provided by special instruments and services.

Let us generalize possibilities of creation of professional networks of teachers on the basis of their usage.

E-mails and mailing lists

An e-mail is the first Internet service which is widespread and effective and provides the possibility of exchanging messages from one persons to another or from one person to others. Sometimes mailing lists are also included here – some e-mail addresses which are common for a lot of people, subscribers of this mailing list, add this service.

Webinars

Teachers actively participate in webinars (associations are «Partnership in studies», Intel and the others) and organization of webinars by free facility services (onwebinar.ru, seemedia.pro). The main opportunities of webinars are use of video or audio broadcasting; simultaneous demonstration of presentation or actions on a desktop; switching on an electronic board for simultaneous work of listeners; parallel socializing with audience in a chat; surveys; function of «raising of hand»; operational management of listeners' rights, additional chat-room including private; transmission of files; by translation of movies and the like (for example, http://webinar.ru);

Free services often have a limit on the amount of participants, management of listeners' rights. For example, teachers actively use Skype as a service for audio/video conferences with possibilities of previous registration of participants, showing desktop to the participants of seminars. But connecting of several participants of video of conferences requires payment. The usage of Google account also gives a possibility to conduct video conferences for 9 participants which have the earlier mention account. Microsoft for Education offers free of charge Office 365 with the Lync product which gives the possibility to exchange, discuss and give a general access to the desktop.

Sites, blogs, forums

In order to create free sites, web pages educational establishments and teachers use all free resources more frequently: Edukit or School Champion (http://schoolchampion.in.ua), Ukoz (www.ucoz.ru) and sites of Google (www.sites.google.com). Each of these environments is free of charge and it can be computer-integrated with other resources. Possibilities of the portal "Class estimation" (www.klassnaocinka.com.ua) allow to create distant courses and teach students from any place of Ukraine. Personal blogs of teachers of different subjects, methodical associations (gennitv.blogspot.com, karchevska.blogspot.com, krasnyiluch-moinf.edukit.lg.ua) and use of forums (http://forum.rgo.msk.ru/) allow to organize an exchange of experience and professional communication among teachers from different countries. There are plenty of educational sites and blogs, which contribute to creation of various resources by teachers. In accordance with the level of professional development a teacher can read or discuss colleagues' articles or upload their own developments on methodical portals and educational internet editions (metodportal.net, www.teacherjournal.com.ua, http://goo.gl/pLtFxw).

Wiki

Teachers create electronic documents individually or collectively, information in which is given in the form of electronic data and for the use of which hardware is needed. Word and tabular processors (e.g. cloudy services of Google and Microsoft) can become such instruments for this purpose, (WikiWiki) is a social service which allows any user to edit text of a site (write, make alteration, delete, create reference to the new articles). For example, except for the most widely spread resource of Wikipediya the service WikiWiki is used in Ukraine to place educational, research projects of students (wiki.iteach.com.ua) or resources for professional development and professional co-operation of teachers (eduwiki.uran.net.ua, Zapowiki, Lugawiki, Mikolawiki). A vivid example is creation of regional resource for the collaboration of teachers in Lugansk region (Lugawiki) and social professional network of teachers in Lisichansk (wikilic.org.ua) which are based on the ideas of social constructivism which assists to development of creation and collaboration and realized by 2.0 web technology.

Social networks

Teachers co-operate in social networks, use Twitter, Linked-In, Facebook, Vkontakte in order to discuss professional questions and examination of creation of educational resources.

On the basis of the special platforms

There are program platforms for the construction of own professional networks which allow the author-creator of a network to determine a design independently, set the levels of access for different groups of users. Any created network is characterized by the set of services of network communication, joint activity which provide delivery of news, search of partners, placing and discussion of materials and others.

Professional network of Microsoft «Partnership in studies» gives certain knowledge and skills in the use of ICT for teachers' professional growth. A teacher has a right to change, to copy, to diffuse, to pass, to reproduce, to publish, to create, to pass any information, software, products or services, adhering to the copyrights. But the Microsoft company reserves the right to the network updating, including creation of any additional possibilities and new functions; to look through materials, placed on intercommunication services and to delete any materials at its own discretion and to close access to any or all services of connection at any time without notifications.

For example, one of priority directions in the network «Partnership in studies» set six subject communities of an innately mathematical cycle:

- mathematics (ua.partnersinlearningnetwork.com/communities/mathematics)
- physics (ua.partnersinlearningnetwork.com/communities/geography)
- chemistry (ua.partnersinlearningnetwork.com/communities/chemistry)
- biology (ua.partnersinlearningnetwork.com/communities/biology_b)
- geography (ua.partnersinlearningnetwork.com/communities/geography).

The easiest way to organize a professional network is with the help of Googleplus, creating your own professional circles or joining in existing. In order to create a professional network it is necessary to have the proper level of ICT competence (level of deepening of knowledge or creation of knowledge) and be able to use existing resources. For example, teachers of mathematics and chemistry can use intellectual searching system Nigma which is based on clustering of accepted documents   (http://www.nigma.ru/index.php?t=math, http://info.nigma.ru/index.php/nigma-himiya.html) for a search and solving tasks, and http://learningapps.org/ to create interactive lessons on the Internet.

The presence of teachers' professional networks of different subjects and possibility of creation of new knowledge needs subsequent research in associations and professional networks of the world in order to create unique informational educational environments for studies and professional development.

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