Significant Aspects of Professional Orientation of Beginning Teachers

Abstract

This paper summarizes the results of qualitative research concerning the process of becoming a teacher based on the concept of professional identification (Rymeš, Štikar et al., 2003). A semi-structured in-depth interview combined with the "lifeline" method (Schütze, 1991) were used. The research was carried out on 13 teachers (male/female), having experience ranging from 1 to 6 years at the 2nd stage of primary schools, and its results show that the success rate among beginning teachers in forming a relationship with their profession, which later leads to their identification with the profession and assuming the resulting professional obligations, is connected with both internal and external factors. Connecting one’s own future with the teaching profession is preceded by self-affirmation, telling oneself that the work satisfies one’s internal needs and enables one to assert one’s abilities. On the basis of this research, we identified significant internal variables which are part of beginning teachers’ professional orientation.

Key word: beginning teacher, professional identity, professional orientation, development of relationship with occupation, qualitative research.

Introduction

The fact that the teacher’s professional role is an expression of social expectations is probably a significant reason for its normative demarcation in any period. New social conditions in the Czech Republic during the last 20 years have imposed new requirements and pre-indicated new emphasis on roles in the teaching profession.