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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF VOCAL MUSIC TEACHERS IN THE CONTEXT OF LIFELONG LEARNING: THEORETICAL CONNOTATIONS, CORE CHARACTERISTICS AND THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

In the context of rapid educational digitalization and deepening reforms, the teaching profession is undergoing significant role transformation. Teachers are increasingly expected to act not only as transmitters of knowledge but also as facilitators of learners' development, innovators of educational methods, and practitioners of lifelong learning, which is explicitly emphasized in contemporary global policy and analytical reports [4, p. 15-22; 9, p. 76-82]. For vocal music teachers, this shift entails the need to preserve the value of classical vocal traditions (academic singing, bel canto, work with breath and resonance) while adapting to contemporary styles and diverse educational demands (pop, jazz, musical theatre), as well as to the different age-related and physiological characteristics of learners. The expansion of digital tools – online platforms, voice recording and analysis software, and blended lesson formats – further intensifies the requirement for teachers' technological literacy and integrated professional knowledge for teaching with technology [9]. As a result, the model of “one-time” pre-service training is increasingly insufficient, and the boundaries between pre-service preparation and in-service development should be open and interconnected within a lifelong learning logic [11; 1, p. 59-71]. The purpose of this abstract is to concisely outline the concept of teacher professional development within the logic of lifelong learning, identify its core characteristics and theoretical foundations, and demonstrate their significance for the modernization of vocal pedagogy.

Lifelong learning-oriented teacher professional development is understood as a continuous, systematic, and predominantly self-directed process of professional growth across a teacher's career, aimed at updating educational beliefs, deepening professional knowledge, improving pedagogical skills, and strengthening professional ethics in response to the changing needs of learners and sociocultural challenges [1, p. 59-71]. In the temporal dimension, this process spans the entire career cycle – from pre-service preparation and the induction/adaptation stage to the consolidation of an individual teaching style and a mature phase characterized by mentoring, expertise, and innovation in school music education [7]. In the motivational dimension, it integrates external incentives (educational policy, evaluation systems, professional development requirements, and standards of career advancement) with internal drivers (professional calling, pursuit of pedagogical mastery, and responsibility for learners' artistic and

psychological well-being) [10, p. 67-75; 3]. In the content dimension, it emphasizes holistic competence development: specialized knowledge in vocal physiology, music theory, and repertoire analysis; methods of voice formation, articulation, and intonation accuracy; skills for designing individualized learning trajectories; as well as interdisciplinary competences – educational technology application, research literacy, case development, and psychological-pedagogical support (including work with performance anxiety and motivation for public appearances) [1, p. 59-71; 2, p. 13-19]. In the formal dimension, it combines self-directed learning, collegial learning in professional communities, and structured professional training, festival schools, and master classes, ensuring a direct link between learning content and classroom and extracurricular practice [6; 2, p. 13-19].

Lifelong learning-oriented professional development of vocal music teachers displays four interrelated characteristics. First, continuity and sustainability: teachers regularly update techniques, repertoire, and methods through cycles of reflection, experimentation, and improvement [8], while high-quality education systems increasingly emphasize sustained professional learning opportunities aligned with evolving expectations for teacher competence [4, p. 15-22; 9, p. 76-82]. Second, initiative and autonomy: teachers act as active agents of their own growth, diagnosing learning needs based on practice and independently selecting content and learning formats; when such choice is available, engagement and professional ownership increase [8, p. 67-75; 10]. Third, practicality and applicability: learning must be connected to real classroom contexts and performance preparation, including the use of digital voice assessment tools, strategies for working with diverse timbres and ranges, and methods of psychological-pedagogical support during preparation for public performance [6; 2, p. 13-19]. Fourth, diversity and openness: the development of ICT and the globalization of music culture broaden both the content and forms of professional learning – combining face-to-face and online formats as well as formal and non-formal learning [4, p. 15-22; 9, p. 76-82].

The theoretical foundation of lifelong learning-oriented teacher professional development comprises four complementary perspectives:

1) Malcolm Knowles' andragogy emphasizes adult learners' self-direction, reliance on experience, and problem-oriented learning; therefore, professional programs for vocal music teachers should be designed around real educational challenges and provide freedom in choosing thematic modules [10].

2) Paul Lengrand's lifelong education theory conceptualizes education as a continuous process integrating formal, non-formal, and informal learning and highlights openness and adaptability of educational trajectories [11]. Applied to vocal pedagogy, it supports the idea of a coherent learning continuum across career stages.

3) Stage models of teacher professional development demonstrate that learning needs change depending on experience and professional roles; thus, support systems should be sensitive to career phases and avoid universal "one-package-for-all" solutions [4; 7].

4) The TPACK perspective underscores the need for an integrated understanding of content, pedagogy and technology; for vocal music teachers, this implies purposeful

development of digital and methodological expertise for using recording, analysis and online instructional tools in ways that enhance artistic and educational outcomes [9].

Teacher professional development and lifelong learning practices form a mutually reinforcing relationship. Continuous learning helps update pedagogical beliefs, modernize professional knowledge and methods, cultivate research and reflective culture, and reduce risks of professional burnout [3; 5]. Conversely, professional standards, career goals, and desired specializations (e.g., children's vocal education, adolescent voice work, preparation for academic or pop competitions) provide lifelong learning with clear structure and practical relevance, decreasing the risk of "learning for the sake of learning" [1, p. 59-71; 2, p. 13-19]. Ultimately, this supports sustainable growth trajectories for vocal music teachers and enhances the quality of music education by promoting learners' vocal potential and artistic culture [6]. Future directions include empirical studies of lifelong learning practices among vocal music teachers in different regions and the development of digital professional learning environments that integrate resources of formal, non-formal, and informal education.

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