Article

The Teacher Image Interpretation in Student Teachers: A Linguistic Anthropology Approach

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Abstract: The study aims to determine whether the images of a teacher in the normative document and the minds of student teachers coincide, as well as to identify the differences. A total of 236 students of the Faculty of Philology and History participated in the associative experiment. The words "ability", "readiness", and "possession" are the most common words used in the normative documents of the Russian Federation in the context of higher education. The concept of "teacher" is the main stimulus word in the associative experiment. The results of the associative experiment revealed a group of the most frequent associative words. In addition, based on the quantitative indicators of the associative experiment, nine thematic groups of associative words were formed. A comparative analysis of the indicators of an associative experiment involving students from different countries can make it possible to compare the features of national education systems and show their effect on the formation of a teacher image in the minds of student teachers.

Keywords: competency; image of a teacher; language means; linguistic anthropology approach

1. Introduction

A teacher is one of the central figures of modern education. In fact, education has always been important for a person since a teacher is in charge of the education and up-bringing of the younger generation. In addition, teachers play an important role in the personality formation and skill development of a pedagogical student. Teachers should focus on a holistic approach, which includes support for social, emotional, and cognitive development, a comfortable interaction between students, and management of the educational process [1]. It is crucial to use an interdisciplinary approach to teaching and integrate knowledge from various disciplines with an emphasis on the practical use of the information [2]. Rapid modernization processes in the modern world are posing new challenges and requirements for a teacher in the context of the application of educational approaches based on the interaction of theory and practice [3]. The pedagogical competence of a teacher depends on three components within the framework of professional competence: work, knowledge, and education [4].

In Russia, the document that reflects the professional requirements for a teacher job is the Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education (FSES HE). The requirements in the document take into account current trends in education reform and the standards for training teachers in a higher educational institution. However, pedagogical university applicants do not fully understand all the challenges of their profession as they do not always imagine the requirements for this job, although the teaching profession itself seems attractive to them. Hence, there are difficulties when adapting to a new profession.

Sociological surveys of 2016 showed that only 21% of the respondents considered the teaching profession a prestigious one. Later, the shortage of teachers increased. This fact indicated a decrease in the desire to work as a teacher among the graduates of pedagogical universities in Europe [5].

In the modern world, there is a growing need to develop state programs aimed at increasing the motivation of schoolchildren to become teachers and the desire of students to engage in teaching activities in the future [6]. For example, in 2020, the all-Russian program "Zemsky Teacher" was implemented. The program provides financial aid to attract teachers to work in small settlements in Russia [7].

Teacher identity research, for instance, examines the ways in which individuals perceive themselves as teachers and how their personal beliefs and experiences influence their teaching practices. This body of literature can contribute to understanding how student teachers construct their own teacher image and how it evolves throughout their training and professional development [8].

Studies on career choice in teaching explore the factors that influence individuals' decisions to become teachers. These factors, which may include personal values, societal expectations, and educational experiences, can shape the initial teacher image that individuals hold before entering teacher education programs [9].

Motivational factors can influence student teachers' teacher image in several ways. Firstly, motivation can shape the initial perceptions and expectations they have about the teaching profession. For example, a student teacher who is primarily motivated by a passion for education may hold an idealistic teacher image, viewing teaching as a noble and fulfilling profession that allows them to positively influence students' lives. On the other hand, a student teacher who is primarily motivated by extrinsic factors may have a more practical and transactional teacher image, focusing on job security or vacation time [10].

Furthermore, teaching motivation can also impact the interpretations and expectations student teachers have regarding their own roles and responsibilities as teachers. Those who are intrinsically motivated may prioritize student-centered approaches, focusing on fostering students' growth and development. In contrast, those driven by extrinsic motives may prioritize external indicators of success, such as standardized test scores or evaluations [11].

It is important to note that teaching motivation and teacher image are mutually influential. Student teachers' teacher image can shape their motivation by providing a vision of the kind of teacher they aspire to be. At the same time, their motivation can shape their teacher's image by influencing the values, goals, and priorities they hold regarding teaching [12].

While there have been studies examining various aspects of teacher-student interactions, there has been a lack of comprehensive research on the interpretation of teacher images from a linguistic anthropology perspective. Previous studies might have primarily focused on quantitative measures, such as classroom observations or surveys, neglecting the subjective interpretations and cultural influences that shape student teachers' perceptions of ideal teaching. This gap suggests the need for a more in-depth investigation into the multifaceted nature of teacher image interpretation, taking into account the socio-cultural context in which it occurs.

Understanding how student teachers interpret teacher images is essential for effective teacher education and professional development. By neglecting the subjective and cultural dimensions, previous studies have not captured the full complexity of how student teachers construct meaning around teaching and how their interpretations are influenced by cultural backgrounds, personal experiences, and social interactions. A linguistic anthropology approach offers valuable tools and frameworks to analyze the intricate interplay between language, culture, and social factors in shaping student teachers' interpretation of teacher images.

The examples above show that the teacher image that the applicants develop when choosing a profession diverges from the professional requirements and personal qualities of a teacher imposed by the state order and the administration of educational institutions. Thus, young teachers find themselves in a stressful situation that can provoke leaving the profession [13]. The objective of the study is to compare the teacher job requirements defined by the Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education of the Russian

Federation and the ideas of student teachers about the teaching profession. The purpose of the study is to identify whether the teacher image in student teachers' minds corresponds to the teacher job requirements described in the Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education of the Russian Federation. By adopting a linguistic anthropology approach, the study aims to uncover the underlying socio-cultural dynamics, discursive practices, and linguistic nuances that shape student teachers' interpretations. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of the subjective and culturally embedded aspects of teacher image interpretation that may have been overlooked in previous research.

Education systems worldwide face common challenges related to teacher preparation, pedagogical practices, and the development of effective teaching methodologies. The interpretation of teacher images by student teachers is a fundamental aspect of their professional identity formation and can have a profound impact on their teaching practices.

By adopting a linguistic anthropology approach, the study moves beyond a purely quantitative or standardized perspective and explores the culturally situated aspects of teacher image interpretation. This allows for a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between language, culture, and social factors that shape student teachers' perceptions. Such insights can contribute to the development of more culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate teacher education programs and professional development initiatives. Furthermore, the international relevance of the study is also evident in its potential to foster cross-cultural comparisons and knowledge exchange. The linguistic anthropology approach provides a framework that transcends national boundaries and offers a common language for analyzing the socio-cultural dimensions of teacher image interpretation. This enables researchers and educators from different countries to engage in meaningful discussions, share insights, and learn from each other's experiences, ultimately promoting a global dialogue on effective teacher education practices.

Theoretical Background

Before moving on to methodology, it is essential to define the features of the anthropological linguistics approach that underlies this study. In recent decades, the focus of the scientific paradigm is an anthropological approach; "human" becomes the basis of any research ("teacher"—for this study). Consequently, a teacher should be focused on their development, in particular the improvement of scientific achievements, and the involvement of student teachers in scientific developments [14].

In the studies by Hyland [15], there are five different models of teacher education reflecting different approaches to learning:

- The technical Model. This model deals with the study of pedagogical methods and techniques that can be used in the classroom. It depends on the fact that teachers should have perfect teaching skills and control over the behavior of students.
- The academic Model. It applies theory and scientific research in pedagogy and other fields. It focuses on the development of theoretical knowledge and understanding of pedagogical actions.
- The practical Model. This model focuses on teaching teachers the most effective methods for practical work with students.
- The reflective Model. It depends on the reflection of the teaching practice and understanding of the student's personality. It aims to develop the self-esteem of teachers and their ability to take into account the needs of students.
- The critical Model. The purpose of this model is to help teachers understand the social role of education.

This approach originated in philosophy but was extended to other sciences. Linguistic anthropologists study how language suggests and creates social relationships in a cultural context [16] and the use of language as social action. Although folk ideologies prevail, written and spoken language do more than predicate. It implies actions that presuppose and create social relations in a cultural context. The most important social and cultural processes are mediated through language.

Theories and methods of linguistic anthropology have been productively applied in educational processes. First, educational language and linguistic anthropology clarify each other's problems. Linguoanthropological approaches to the use of language have enriched theoretical knowledge about educational processes.

An analysis of the social and cultural use of language is successful when it takes into account all four aspects. However, some studies often focus on only one of them. Linguistic anthropology has made a significant contribution to the understanding of educational processes since education is primarily mediated by the use of language. When teachers and students speak and write, they demonstrate not only knowledge about the studied subject but also their belonging to social groups both inside and outside the communicative act [17]. These connections created in educational settings can influence how learners study the subject and form their life trajectories.

Considering the development of language science and the consistent opposition of structural and anthropological linguistics in the last quarter of the 20th, early 21st-century studies centered around the problem of humans in language. The vector of research within the framework of structural linguistics was a shift from a linguistic form to the spectrum of meanings expressed by this form. At the same time, the vector of anthropological linguistics is a movement from a certain content essence to the system of verbal and non-verbal ways of expressing this essence [18]. Linguistic anthropology is different from linguistics in two ways: it focuses on the use of language rather than linguistic form and emphasizes a language user's point of view.

A modern teacher, in the words of Tican et al. [19]; Basilotta–Gómez–Pablos et al. [20], requires some advanced abilities for effective interaction with students. The main ones are the following:

- Communication skills: the ability to communicate effectively with students, listen to them, encourage active participation in the learning process, and maintain relationships with parents.
- Motivation skills: the ability to stimulate interest in learning and maintain the motivation of students for a long period.
- Adaptability: the ability to change an approach to learning depending on the needs and abilities of each student.
- Pedagogical knowledge: knowledge of the theory and methodology of teaching, didactic techniques, and approaches to the development of learners.
- Emotional intelligence: teachers' ability to understand and control their emotions, as well as perceive and understand the emotions of students.

The modern teacher pursues the goal of maximizing the knowledge provided for the students and aims to strengthen the social effect of teaching. The teacher's ability to teach effectively manifests itself in many aspects. Among them, Sims et al. [21] indicate deep knowledge of the subject, the consideration of the individual needs and abilities of students, the effective use of various teaching methods and technologies, the creation of a stimulating learning atmosphere, readiness for continuous improvement, and compliance with ethical standards.

Teacher leadership is an important component of effective educational activities. Teachers with leadership qualities create an open and encouraging environment where students develop initiative, creativity, and independence. In this case, the teacher can motivate their students to achieve good academic results and help them develop leadership skills [22]. The leadership qualities of a teacher include the ability to communicate positively with students and colleagues, set goals and comply with them, effectively manage time and resources, innovate and be creative, as well as resolve conflicts and provide effective support [23].

The significance of this study lies in several aspects. Firstly, it addresses a theoretical gap in the existing literature by focusing on the subjective and culturally determined aspects of teacher image interpretation. While previous studies have primarily focused on quantitative measures of teacher-student interactions, this study recognizes the importance

of understanding the subjective interpretations and cultural influences that shape student teachers' perceptions of ideal teaching. Secondly, the study contributes to the field of IA by applying its framework to explore the multifaceted nature of teacher image interpretation. IA, as a sub-discipline of anthropology, offers valuable insights into the socio-cultural context in which language and communication occur. By adopting an IA approach, the study aims to uncover the underlying socio-cultural factors and linguistic practices that inform student teachers' interpretations of the teacher image. Thirdly, the research findings hold practical implications for teacher education and training programs. Understanding how student teachers interpret the image of teachers can inform the development of more effective teaching practices and curricula. By recognizing the diverse cultural perspectives and expectations surrounding teaching, teacher education programs can better prepare aspiring teachers to navigate the complexities of the profession and meet the needs of diverse student populations.

2. Methods

2.1. Methodological Framework and Research Design

This study mainly depends on the associative experiment method [24]. The method involves the selection of respondents and the stimulus word, compliance with all ethical norms, the calculation of statistical data using software, the analysis of research results, the development of criteria, and the formation of thematic groups highlighting the most frequent associative words. The purpose of this method is to determine and analyze associative relationships between the stimulus word "teacher" and the reaction words that first came to the respondents' minds after reading the stimulus word. Consequently, the ideas of student teachers about a teacher were possible to identify. The associative experiment method shows data based on associations made without any limitations. Therefore, it was possible to further analyze the perception of the teacher image by students. This method allows for the identification of the ideas student teachers have about teachers by analyzing the associations made in response to the stimulus word. By utilizing this method, the research team aims to explore the subjective interpretations and mental representations of teachers held by student teachers. This methodology aligns with the principles of IA by investigating the socio-cultural dimensions and linguistic nuances that shape students' perceptions of teachers.

Secondly, to analyze the normative document, the study applied the method of linguistic reconstruction of the person image as the focus of the study is the teacher image, which is an image of a person. According to the study, the image of a person is a set of subjective and related non-procedural (appearance, clothing, social origin, value system, preferences, desires, and so forth) and procedural (activity, behavior model, lifestyle) characteristics of a real person or a character formed in the mind of another person (group of people, generation, and so forth) through perception, memory, and imagination and reflected in linguistic forms [25]. This method helps to reconstruct any type of human image, for instance, the image of a historical person both based on literary texts and historical documents [26,27]. In addition, the application of this method in a comparative aspect makes it possible to compare several reconstructions of a person's image and identify a system of similarities and differences [28]. Linguistic reconstruction in this study involves the identification and interpretation of linguistic means that reflect the image of a teacher. It also involves the subsequent synthesis of the results to reconstruct the integral image of a teacher. This method involves identifying and interpreting linguistic means that reflect the image of a teacher, such as appearance, clothing, social origin, value system, and behavior model. By reconstructing the integral image of a teacher based on linguistic analysis, the authors aim to understand the subjective characteristics and perceptions associated with the teacher's image. This approach aligns with IA as it investigates how language and linguistic forms reflect and shape cultural constructs, in this case, the image of a teacher.

Thirdly, one of the study objectives is to identify the correspondence/inconsistency of the ideas about the teaching profession in the normative document and the minds of

student teachers. Therefore, it was appropriate to compare the results of the associative experiment and linguistic reconstruction of the teacher's image. To this end, the study used the method of comparative analysis. This allows us to identify correspondences or inconsistencies between the ideas about the teaching profession presented in the normative document and the perceptions of student teachers. Comparative analysis helps to reveal patterns, similarities, and differences in the data, enabling a deeper understanding of the relationship between normative expectations and student teachers' interpretations of the teacher's image.

2.2. Sample

The associative experiment took place at the Elabuga Institute of the Kazan Federal University. A total of 236 students (1–4 years of study) of the Faculty of Philology and History of Elabuga Institute of Kazan Federal University took part in the study. The study involved 42% (21 male and 21 female) of students from the 1st year, 30% (15 male and female) from the 2nd year, 15% (7 male and 8 female) from the 3rd year, and 13% (7 male and 6 female) from the 4th year. To analyze the teacher image perception by different types of students, the study involved students of different study years: first-year students who had just started their studies; second and third-year students whose ideas about the teacher image and pedagogical activity could have changed in the course of the learning process; fourth-year students who had completed their bachelor degree studies and had to decide on their future (to obtain master's degree, start teaching or leave the profession). This selection of the participants in the associative experiment aimed to identify whether the students' perception of a teacher's image differs depending on the study year. The study took place from March to May 2021.

2.3. Data Analysis

At the beginning of the associative experiment, the respondents received the lexeme "teacher" as a stimulus word. As a reaction response, the recipients had to name the first verbal associations that came to mind when they heard the stimulus word. There were no limitations on the number of associative words. As participants provided their associations, the research team collected a range of responses, which varied in terms of content and thematic focus. These responses were then analyzed to identify common patterns and themes among the associations provided by the participants. To form the nine thematic groups, the researchers categorized the associative reactions based on similarities in content or theme. This involved grouping together the associative words that shared similar meanings, ideas, or concepts. For example, if multiple participants provided associations related to "knowledge" or "learning", these responses would be grouped together under a specific thematic category.

Consequently, it was possible to obtain associations of various types and, consequently, form 9 thematic groups. In this case, frequent and single responses were both included. Associative reactions of the same type were considered as one response.

The responses obtained were processed. The quantitative indicators were constructed in Statistica and Microsoft Excel. The software made it possible to create diagrams containing data on each criterion.

The associative experiment was supervised by the university administration. Nevertheless, the study involved a psychologist from the Faculty of Psychology of Kazan Federal University. The psychologist's help was important, as the purpose of the associative experiment was to reconstruct the teacher image in the minds of student teachers.

2.4. Ethical Issues

The research was conducted ethically according to the World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki. The research was approved by the local ethics committees of Kazan Federal University. The survey was conducted in compliance with all ethical standards; all respondents gave their written consent to conduct and process the data of

the associative experiment. It was anonymous and the respondents were not required to provide confidential information. One of the requirements was to indicate the year of study at the time of the experiment. The study was approved by an ethics review committee. All ethical standards were met and not violated in this work.

2.5. Research Limitations

The limitations of the study were the small sample size. The association experiment took place at Kazan Federal University. Therefore, the data from other universities were not considered.

3. Results

The anthropocentrism of modern humanitarian knowledge allows for a multifaceted study of the ideas about a person. However, a person as an object of study is a rather vague phenomenon and the results of the study are extremely generalized in this case. In our opinion, it is much more productive to clarify the object of analysis and study the idea of a person as a carrier of a certain social role: mother, builder, peacemaker, political leader, and so forth. The list of images that have social significance includes the image of a teacher. A teacher has been a major figure in society for thousands of years. Therefore, it is difficult to overestimate the importance of a teacher's personality for the younger generation. As noted above, the image of a teacher is reconstructed based on linguistic means used to characterize it in the normative document, as well as the associative words mentioned as a reaction to the stimulus word "teacher" and fixed in the minds of bachelor students of pedagogical specialties. The normative document was the Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education in the field of training 44.03.05 Pedagogical education (with two training profiles) (bachelor's degree program). The study conducted a linguistic analysis of the content of the Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education in the context of teacher competencies. The analysis reconstructed the image of a teacher created by the developers of the Federal State Educational Standard according to the competencies described in the document. As evidenced by the analysis of the document, the Federal State Educational Standard emphasizes that a modern pedagogical university graduate must possess several professional qualities: activity, independence, the ability to analyze and plan, erudition, diligence, and decisiveness. A teacher is a person who not only applies ready-made solutions and methods but can analyze information, think and create, independently deal with problems, and invent new solutions.

The teacher image that future teachers have does not completely coincide with the teacher image reconstructed in the study based on the normative document. In addition to professional skills, there are everyday realities that accompany the teacher's activities. The reality seems to affect students' perception of teacher competencies and the teaching profession.

3.1. The Teacher Image in the Minds of Student Teachers: A Comparative Analysis
3.1.1. The Image of a Teacher in the Text of the Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education of the Russian Federation

This study attempted to reconstruct the image of a teacher by analyzing the text of the Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education in the field of training 44.03.05 Pedagogical education (with two training profiles) approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation on 9 February 2016. The Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education (FSES HE) is a set of requirements for the implementation of a bachelor's degree program by a state educational institution [29]. Based on the concept of competency, this document describes the qualities and characteristics that a future teacher should possess for the successful implementation of professional activities. According to the requirements for the completion of the bachelor's program, a graduate must have a number of competencies (cultural, general professional, and professional). The verbal expressions that describe a competency reveal and clarify its essence.

The description of each competency begins with the construction "a graduate who has mastered the bachelor's program must have..." which replaces the word "competency".

We found three similar lexemes; they are listed in descending order of frequency: ability (20), readiness (8), and possession (1) (Figure 1). In the document, the noun "ability" implies the ability to perform any action, to do something, to carry out any activity, or to behave in any way [30]. A future teacher is characterized as a subject that has sufficient capabilities (knowledge, skills, and abilities) to carry out professional activities. The lexeme "readiness" means consent and the desire to do something [30]. The noun "readiness" conveys a semantic connection with its derivative adjective "ready", which characterizes a person as an initiative and active subject intending to perform a certain action to achieve their goal [31].
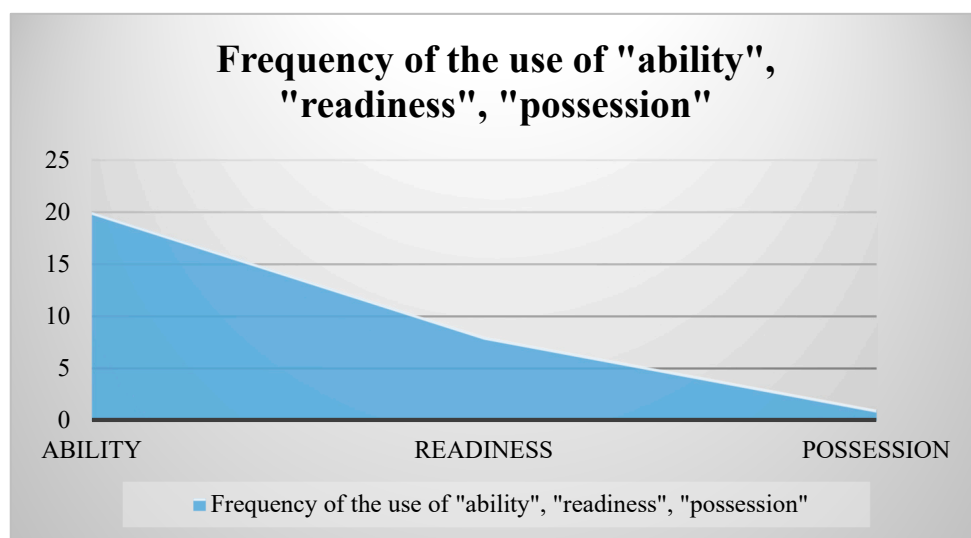

Figure 1. The frequency of the words "ability", "readiness", "possession".

The word "possession" refers to the semantics of the verb "possess" meaning "to be able to act, to be able to deal with something, to have any abilities, knowledge, and skills" [30]. In the context of the Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education, the noun "possession" describes the ability to use various means to achieve an educational goal and is used in the noun + noun construction in the instrumental case. For example, "possession of the basics of professional ethics and speech culture (general professional competency-5)" [29].

In the overwhelming majority of cases, the lexemes "ability" and "readiness" are observed in the noun + infinitive construction. In this case, the main word is a noun correlated with adjectives and a verbal noun. In Russian, these phrases express the ability and disposition to act. In the text of the Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education, the word "ability" (18) is more frequently used in this construction compared to the word "readiness" (4).

The lexemes indicating the activity of an individual appear in the form of an infinitive describing the action that the subject is capable and ready to perform. They are the following:

- the verb denoting an action associated with the purposeful use of something that contributes to human activity: use (7);
- the verbs denoting a creative act of thinking aimed at creating an intellectual product: design (3), develop (1);
- the verbs denoting actions aimed at the implementation of an idea: to carry out (2), to implement (2);
- the verb denoting an action aimed at preserving the properties and qualities of an object: maintain (2);

- the verbs denoting mental activity aimed at cognizing the reality: analyze (1), solve (1), identify (1), realize (1), perceive (1);
- the verbs denoting actions aimed at positive changes in the object: form (1), develop (1);
- the verbs denoting actions aimed at regulating the activities of other subjects: organize (1), lead (1);
- the verb that summarizes any act related to performance: work (1);
- the verb "to possess" (1), which means "to have characteristic qualities and characteristics", rather indicates the state of the subject [30].

In the text of the Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education, the characteristics of the activities of graduates and future teachers are not narrowed to the nomination of actions that the subject has to perform. The verbs listed above relate to nouns specifying that the actions performed by individuals should be directed to or associated with them. In the majority of cases, dependent nouns appear as plural nouns in the accusative case without a preposition; these are less often used in the singular and the instrumental or prepositional cases. The nouns subordinate to the above verbs are as follows: use knowledge, techniques, methods, technologies, capabilities, basics; develop programs, routes, trajectories; design programs; implement programs; implement training, education, development, support; support the level, activity, initiative, independence; organize cooperation; to manage activities; develop abilities; analyze stages, patterns; solve problems; realize significance; perceive differences; identify needs; form needs; work as a team; have motivation.

These nouns, in turn, act as the main words in combination with other nouns that clarify and define the semantics of the main word. At the same time, the dependent and the main noun of the phrase can both have a definition that contributes to a more accurate and complete description of the object. Most dependent nouns and adjectives directly or indirectly denote subjects, various objects, phenomena, processes, and characteristics associated with the concept of education: methods and technologies of teaching and assessment; possibilities of the learning environment; cooperation of students; support for the educational process; educational routes of students; educational programs; educational and research activities of students, motivation to carry out professional activities, etc. For example, "...to implement pedagogical support for socialization and professional self-determination of students (professional competency-5)" [29]; "...to solve the problems of education and spiritual and moral development of students in educational and extracurricular activities (professional competency-3)" [29]; "...to implement training, education, and development taking into account social, age, psychophysical and individual characteristics... (general professional competency-2)" [29]; "...to manage the educational and research activities of students (PC-12)" [29].

A teacher must teach, educate, and develop students; support not only the physical health of students but also their desire to be involved in school life; apply the acquired knowledge in teaching practice; introduce new methods and technologies into teaching; develop educational products and individual educational trajectories; guide the educational and research activities of students and much more. At the same time, teachers' professional activity can be directed not only at the students but also at the teachers themselves. For example, "to design the trajectories of their own professional growth and personal development (professional competency-10)" [29].

The text of the document uses the nouns "readiness" and "ability" in the constructions "noun + preposition + noun in the dative case" and "noun + noun in the instrumental case". These phrases express the idea of action through dependent nouns (communication, self-organization, self-education, support, activity, provision, and interaction). For example, "the ability to communicate in verbal and written forms...(cultural competency-4)" [29], "the ability to self-educate and self-organization skills (cultural competency-6)" [29]; "readiness for psychological and pedagogical support (general professional competency-3)" [29]; "readiness for professional activity...((general professional competency-4)" [29]; "willingness to interact with the participants in the educational process (professional competency-

6)" [29]. The above examples show that a teacher is characterized as an initiative person and a subject that can potentially perform actions related to their professional activity.

Thus, the linguistic analysis of the FSES HE text showed that the image of a teacher can be reconstructed based on the normative document. The latter describes a teacher as an active person who can think creatively, independently, and critically, develops their skills, and is ready for all types of activities related to the educational process.

3.1.2. The Image of a Teacher in the Minds of Student Teachers

The associative words mentioned more than once are listed in the descending order of frequency: Mentor/spiritual mentor (11), knowledge/source of knowledge, gives knowledge (9), school (8), responsible/responsibility (7), example/role model (4), kind/kindness (4), assessment/evaluation (3), fair (3), children (3), a woman (2), low salary (2), intelligence/intellectuals (2), friend (2), support (2), lesson/lessons (2), nerves/bad nerves (2), a grade book (2), punctuality (2), understanding (2) fatigue (2), red pen/red paste (2), glasses (2), altruist (2), love for children (2), exponent (2). The other associative words were mentioned only once (Figure 2).
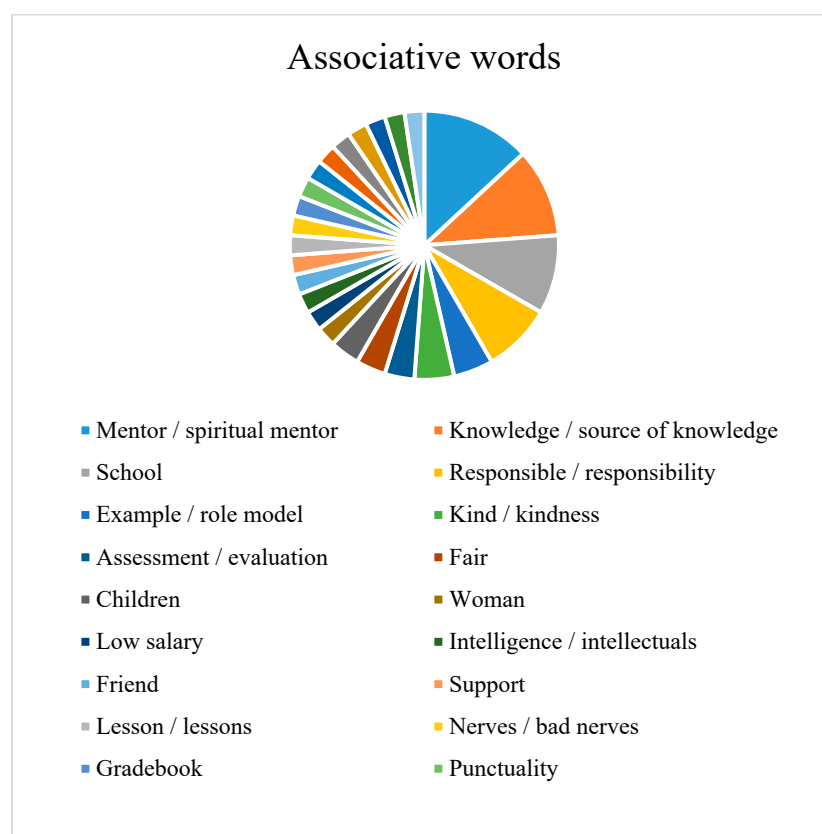

Figure 2. Associative words.

The list of frequent associations shows that the most popular answer was the word "mentor". Explanatory dictionaries define this word as "teacher, educator, and leader; a person who transfers their knowledge and experience to others." In linguistic terms, the lexeme "mentor" is synonymous with the word teacher. In the context of the implementation of the Federal State Educational Standard, there are generic relations between these words when the lexeme "mentor" indicates the role that teachers should play in the educational process: a mentor teacher is viewed as a person who can provide targeted assistance and not only eliminates a problem but helps to overcome it. At the same time, the activities of a mentor teacher are aimed not only at students but also at colleagues.

The second most popular word—knowledge—indicates that the image of a teacher is associated with the information which the student does not know and the teacher is ready

to share. Another common associative word is "school". This word characterizes a teacher as a part of the educational institution that is in charge of the educational and upbringing processes and the subjects of these processes.

Some responses are not only separate lexemes but also word combinations and multi-component constructions: statements in the form of complex sentences. Frequent and single associative words can both be divided into several thematic groups. Let us consider these thematic groups in more detail combining single responses with frequent ones. For convenience, the paper again lists the frequent responses to the stimulus word "teacher".

Although the most frequent associative word in the experiment was the lexeme "mentor", the largest thematic group in terms of the number of reactions to the word "teacher" turned out to be "Personal qualities." This category includes the following units: responsible/responsibility (7); kind/kindness (4); fair (3); intelligence/intellectuals (2), understanding (2); altruist (2); happy; erudite; honesty; openness; tact; smart; vigorous; charismatic; responsive; sociable; versatile; courtesy; composure; wisdom; patience; caring person; worldview; sage; readiness to always help other people (Figure 3).
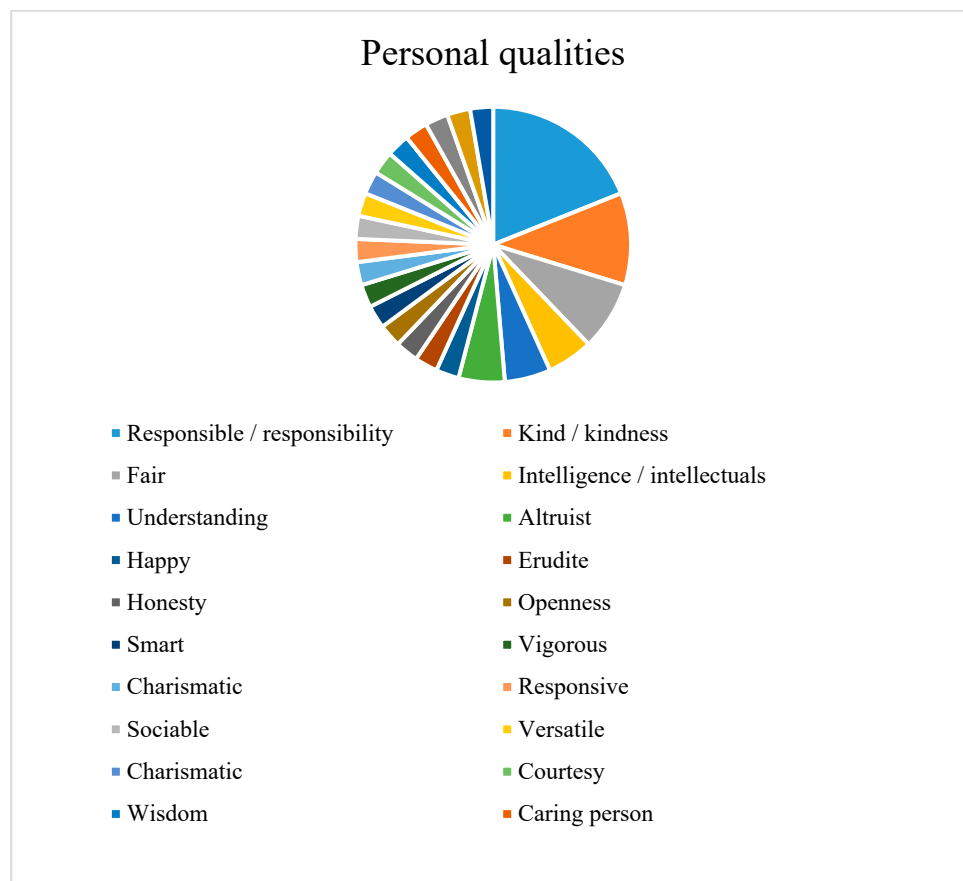

Figure 3. Personal qualities.

The list shows that according to students, the most important qualities are responsibility, kindness, and fairness. Dictionaries interpret the noun "responsibility" as "a duty, the need to give an account of one's actions, deeds, etc., and be responsible for their possible consequences and results" [32]. In other words, a person who plans to become a teacher must be able to fulfill their promises, be aware of the consequences of their actions, and be ready to take responsibility for the possible negative result of these actions. This quality characterizes a person both in relation to other subjects and in relation to their activities. A responsible person is a person that can be relied on so other people feel comfortable with them. A responsible person is a person who can be entrusted with any work and will do

everything to complete it. A responsible teacher fulfills all their assignments and never leaves the children alone.

Linguistic dictionaries define "kindness" as "responsiveness, emotional disposition to people, and the desire to do good deeds" [32]. The words "kind" and "kindness" relate to the adjective "responsive" and the multi-component construction "readiness to always help other people." This quality is mandatory for those planning to become a teacher. Teaching is a person-to-person profession characterized by constant communication with other people and, accordingly, purposeful or unconscious impact on them [33]. It is preferable that the impact is positive, namely, a kind person is more likely to have a beneficial impact. A fair person is a person who acts impartially and prefers the truth [32]. Indeed, this quality is crucial for a teacher as numerous situations require acting under the actual state of affairs. Generally, close attention to the personal qualities of a teacher indicates that until the students graduate from the university and start a job at school, they consider a teacher as an employee who meets certain requirements and as a person who must properly interact with all educational activity subjects. At the same time, these ideas are differentiated in students' minds.

The next thematic group of associative words is the group "Professional qualities", which includes the following language units: mentor/spiritual mentor (11); knowledge/source of knowledge, gives knowledge (9); support (2); competent; experience; development; skillful time management; love for the subject; the person who makes everything move forward; a true teacher has no favorites in the classroom, everyone is equal; the one who brings up conscious generation, the future of the nation and the state; guide; assistant; adviser. This group of associative words suggests that the students are relatively familiar with the requirements for a teacher job and are beginning to realize the peculiarities of their profession. In addition to the "mentor" lexeme discussed above, one of the most frequently mentioned professional qualities of a teacher was a sufficient amount of knowledge not only in the field of the particular subject but also in all spheres of life. A teacher should not only provide information on their subject area, thereby preparing students for admission to a university, but also share knowledge that can be useful in life: how to communicate with other people, how to act in a particular situation, and so forth.

The words related to "Attitude towards students" were combined into a separate category (Figure 4). In the majority of cases, the linguistic units included in this group characterize the teacher's attitude toward children as positive. This is evidenced by the following examples: friend (2); love for children (2), helping children; the main confidant of the child at school; second mother; the one who guides you into the future; a person who completely devotes themselves to students; a person who is happy with their students' success; a person who lights the stars. A reference to such concepts as a friend (the one who has a friendly relationship with other people); mother (a woman in relation to her children); love (a feeling of deep affection for someone) [32] suggests that, from the perspective of the recipients, there should be a close relationship between the teacher and the students, that is, they should be like relatives. There was one word with a negative characteristic to the teacher—"tormentor", which means the one who tortures someone [32]. In our opinion, this reaction is exclusively subjective and a result of the personal relationship of the recipient with their teacher(s). Nevertheless, this opinion did not prevent the recipient from choosing the teaching profession.

The thematic group "Negative characteristics of a teacher's professional activity" combines the words describing the negative aspects of a school teacher's work (Figure 5). It includes the following lexical units: low salary (2); nerves/bad nerves (2); fatigue (2); nervous tic; stress; madhouse; hard work; a lot of documentation; thankless job; the profession is not respected today; a lot of unrelated matters (a lot of obligatory documentation, grants, competitions) instead of the major activities (planning and providing lessons); this game is not worth the candle (the work is not well paid); disrespect. The list shows that according to students, the main negative aspects of the teacher's work are (a) low wages; (b) a large number of unfavorable external factors affecting

their emotional state; (c) disrespect of the society for the teaching profession, which is undeservedly referred to as a service. Nonetheless, as in the case of the associative word "tormentor", the recipients gave a negative description of the profession but chose it as their career. Apparently, in the minds of students, the importance of the teacher's work prevails over the negative aspects of the profession.
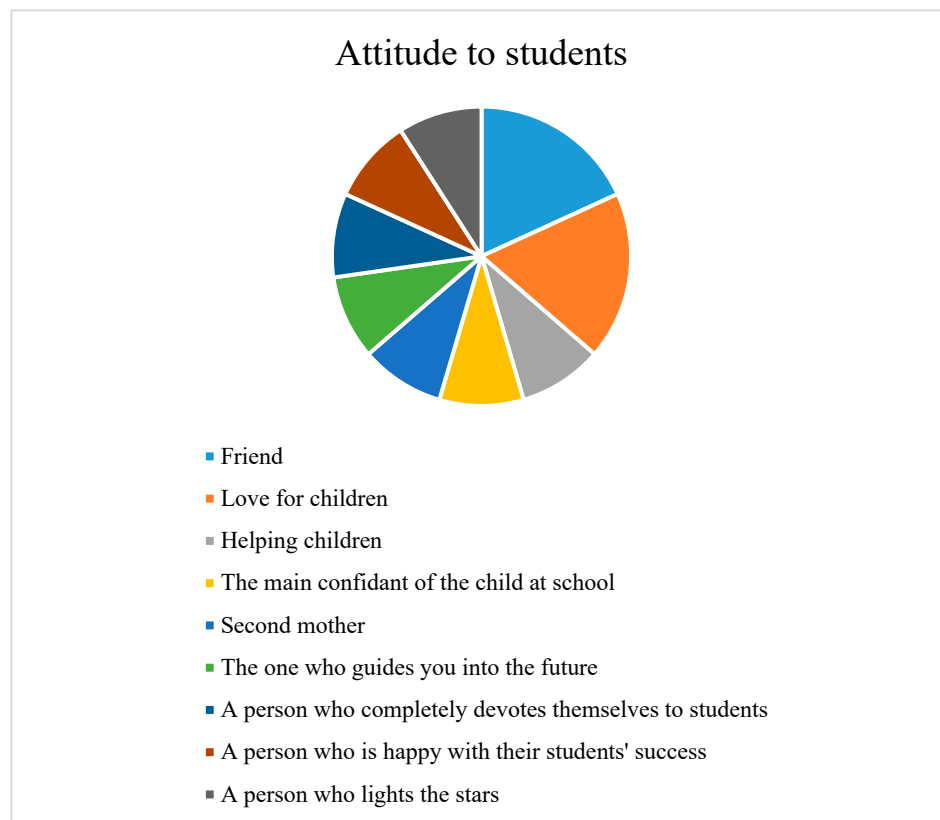

Figure 4. Attitude to students.

The thematic group "Appearance" demonstrated that more than half of the reactions to a teacher's appearance were the associations with women: a woman (2); a woman dressed in a business style; a woman in a classic suit; a woman having a plaid and glasses; neatness; forever young; elegance; smile (Figure 6). This confirms the current gender situation in education: the overwhelming majority of teachers are women. Baskakova notes that the gender problem of the education system has been the feminization of the industry and the teaching staff. In general, in education (as a branch of the economy), the proportion of women is extremely high and, until recently, gradually increased. Today eight out of ten workers in this field are women [34]. It is worth noting that this problem has not been solved as men are reluctant to work at school.

In the thematic group "Teacher activity subjects and objects", the most frequent lexeme is "school" (8). It is a local notion that defines both an educational institution that educates the young generation and a building where this institution is located [32] (Figure 7). The frequency of this lexeme indicates a close connection between the teacher and the student (former student) through a common abstract and real learning space. The other lexical units denote the realities associated with the traditional concept of education. In this case, there is no mention of interactive and digital technologies: grade book (2); red pen/red ink (2); glasses (2); school progress report; textbook; copybooks; pointer; books; chalk. With the help of the Nvivo program, it was found that the repetition of the word "school" is 15 times a day, grade book—14; red pen/red ink—14; glasses—13; school progress report—7; textbook—7; copybooks—6; pointer—7; books—7; chalk—6.

Apparently, the essence of the teaching profession is more important for students than various kinds of innovations.
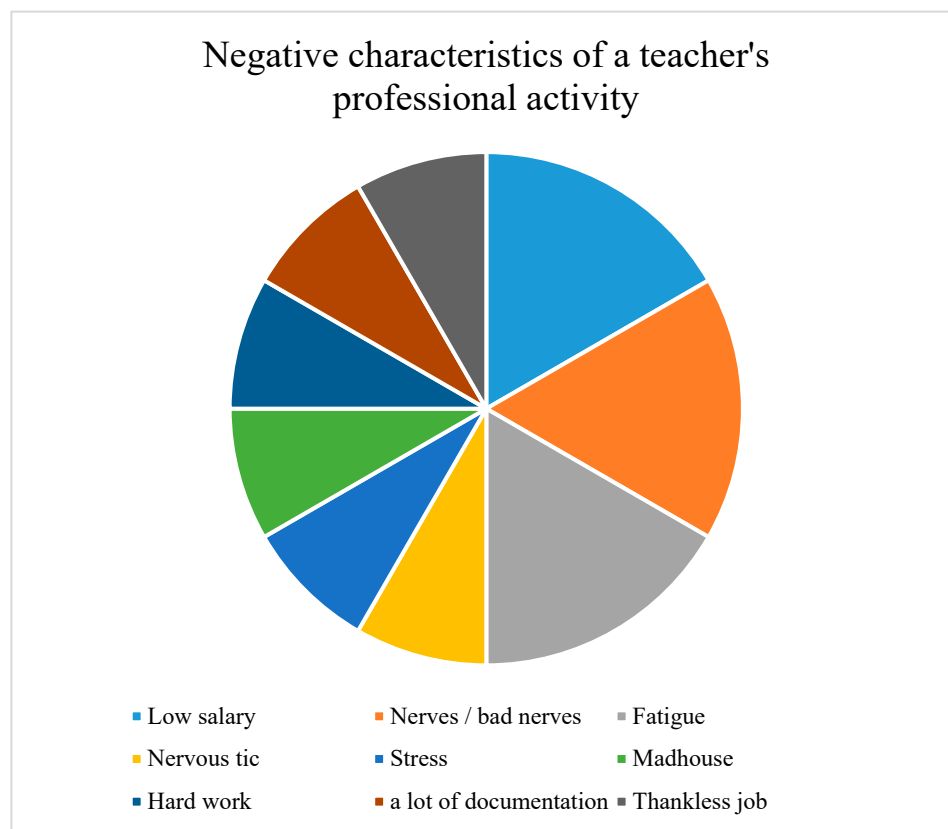

Figure 5. Negative characteristics of a teacher's professional activity.
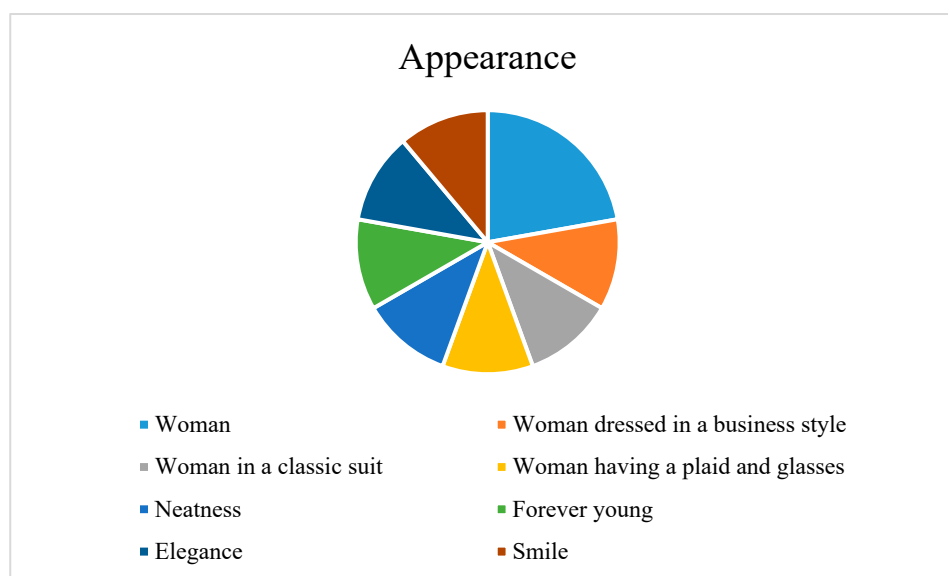

Figure 6. Appearance.

In the center of the thematic group "Educational activity and its components", there are words associated with students, the type of training, and education quality control: assessment/evaluation (3); children (3), lesson/lessons (2); work; education; Federal State Educational Standards; excellent grades; poor grades; upbringing; psychology (Figure 8). The thematic group "Teacher activity events and processes" mainly contains the borderline

realities of the educational process. For example, the combination of the words "September 1st" and "autumn" indicates the beginning of training. Thus, the words and word combinations such as "examinations", "farewell Bell", "bell", and "summer holidays" describe the end of the educational process. The thematic group "Subjective attitude to the teacher" contains words of heterogeneous semantics expressing sympathy (martyr); characterizing the teacher as an exceptional person (hero; superhero; genius); causing positive emotions in the recipient (native; warm; own; respect).
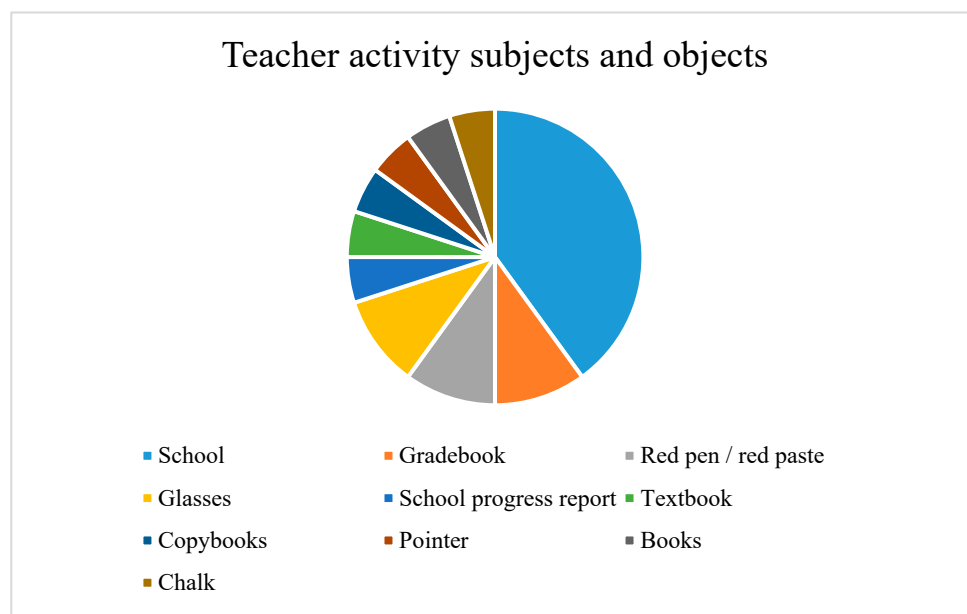
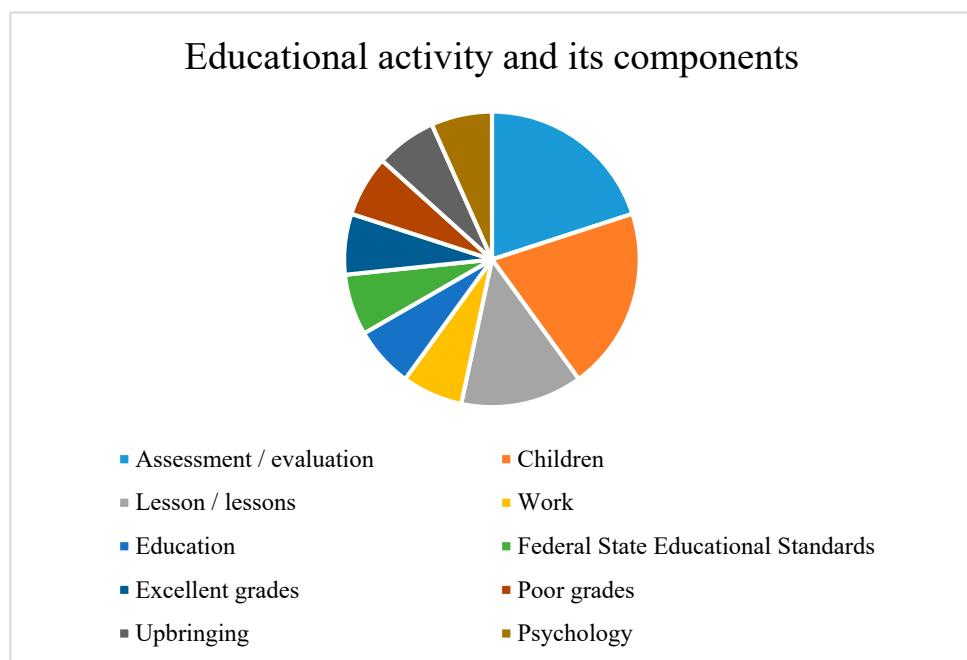**Figure 7.** Teacher activity subjects and objects.

Figure 8. Educational activity and its components.

Unfortunately, the thematic group "Role model" turned out to be small in terms of the number of examples; it includes such linguistic units as an example/role model (4); exponent (2); a person you look up to; authority (Figure 9). The least frequent thematic group is "Connection with the subject taught by the teacher". It includes single mentions

of two school subjects (Russian language and History). The choice of the subjects is due to the experiment population, which consisted of the students of the Faculty of Philology and History, in other words, future teachers of the Russian language and History.
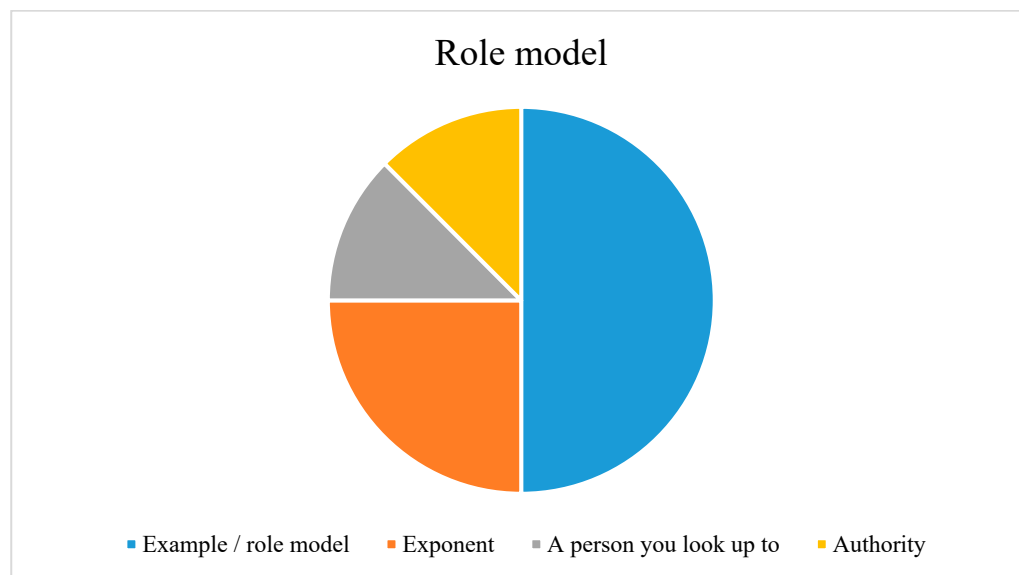

Figure 9. Role model.

4. Discussion

In global science, there are examples of the application of the associative experiment to study the professional competence of student teachers. The method of the associative experiment is common; however, the key differences are the peculiarities of its implementation, the sample of students, and the stimulus words. This may be due to the different goals and research objectives, as well as the influence of the characteristics of the national education system in each particular country. An associative experiment can be conducted twice—at the initial and final stages of the study—in order to analyze the influence of the learning and teaching processes on the formation of specific associations in the minds of students [35].

The purpose of the present research was to analyze the teacher image in the minds of student teachers. To this end, the lexeme "teacher" was chosen as a stimulus word. In addition, the study carried out the associative experiment once to obtain reliable results. The results were used to analyze the associative words and combine them into thematic groups: "Professional qualities", "Attitude towards students", "Negative characteristics of a teacher's activity", "Appearance", "Teacher activity subjects and objects", "Educational activity and its components", "Teacher activity events and processes", "Subjective attitude to the teacher", "Role model." Another difference is the place that hosted the study—Kazan Federal University. This fact implies that only Russian students were involved. However, there are comparative studies based on an associative experiment that involved Russian and French students [36]. The similarities, first of all, lie in the choice of the stimulus word (teacher) and the criteria for the formation of thematic groups. The differences can be observed not only in the respondent sample characteristics but also in the results obtained. This is explained by the involvement of students of different nationalities and, consequently, different national education systems. These peculiarities influence the formation of a teacher's image. Thus, an advantage of this research type is a comparative analysis based on an associative experiment involving Russian and Chinese students and focusing on the stimulus lexeme "teacher". According to Chinese students, this lexeme is primarily associated with the words "student", "school/university", and "strict." Russian students often associate teachers with academic subjects, in particular, History and Mathematics.

However, the results of our associative experiment show that the most frequent associative words are the following: mentor/spiritual mentor (11), knowledge/source of knowledge, gives knowledge (9), school (8), responsible/responsibility (7), example/role model (4), kind/kindness (4), assessment/evaluation (3), fair (3), children (3). The less popular associative words include a woman (2), low salary (2), intelligence/intellectuals (2), friend (2), support (2), lesson/lessons (2), nerves/bad nerves (2), grade book (2), punctuality (2), understanding (2) fatigue (2), red pen/red ink (2), glasses (2), altruist (2), love for children (2), exponent (2). This result indicates a difference in pedagogical values of teachers themselves and applicants for education. Based on the quantitative indicators of the associative experiment, nine thematic groups of associative words were formed: "Professional qualities", "Attitude towards students", "Negative characteristics of a teacher's professional activity", "Appearance", "Teacher activity subjects and objects", "Educational activity and its components", "Teacher activity events and processes", "Subjective attitude to the teacher", "Role model." In previous studies, the groups giving different characteristics to the teacher were the most numerous; for instance, those include the following words: good, creative, cheerful, active, well-mannered, educated, fair, and smart [24]. The results of our research show that the group "Subjective attitude towards the teacher" contains a small number of associative words with a subjective assessment of a teacher, their personal qualities or professional activity: martyr, hero, superhero, genius, native, warm, own, respect. At the same time, the thematic groups "Professional qualities" and "Attitude towards students" contain the most frequent and diverse associative words. This indicates the differences in the results of the associative experiments. Thus, the associative experiment based on the stimulus word "teacher" showed that in the linguistic consciousness of the Kazan Federal University students, first of all, a teacher is an experienced educator who offers help in difficult situations, stores and transfers knowledge about the world, and carries out professional activities within the educational institution. The study also used the comparative analysis of the teacher image described in the text of the Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education of the Russian Federation and in the minds of pedagogical university students (based on the associative experiment carried out). This advantage made it possible to trace the peculiarities of the teacher image representation both in theory (that is, in documents) and in practice (in the minds of students).

On the other hand, it is important to conduct a comparative analysis of the indicators of an associative experiment involving students from different countries. It can compare the features of national education systems and their impact on the formation of the teacher image. Hence, the representatives of the considered literary directions present the results on a homogeneous basis of mainly one sample. Consequently, the comparison of findings can help in the improvement of global strategies for the development of education and the creation of more effective teaching methods [37].

Competency-based approaches to teacher education have gained considerable popularity in recent years, but they are not indisputable. Thus, some experts argue that the competency-based approach to education is extremely focused on achieving maximum results. In this case, it does not consider the individual needs and characteristics of each student. According to this criticism, focusing on specific competencies can decrease education quality and conceal the uniqueness of each student [38].

The study also revealed that the competency-based approach to education excessively accelerates the learning process. It may result in insufficient learning of the material. The application of this approach in the context of the education of a future teacher can force students to focus on gaining knowledge without understanding the essence of the subject.

5. Conclusions

The Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education in the field of training 44.03.05 Pedagogical education (with two training profiles) (bachelor's level) describes a list of competencies reflecting the requirements applied to a pedagogical university graduate—a future school teacher. The linguistic analysis of the competencies reconstructed the image

of a teacher based on the requirements defined by the Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education. As a result, it was found that a teacher is an active and independent person capable of both analytical and organizational activities.

The associative experiment, which involved student teachers of the Elabuga Institute of Kazan Federal University, showed that in the minds of future teachers, the image of a teacher, on the one hand, coincides with certain ideas reflected in the Federal State Educational Standard. For example, a teacher is a spiritual mentor, a source of knowledge, which corresponds to general professional competency-2, general professional competency-3, professional competency-1, professional competency-3, etc. Such associations as "responsibility" and "fairness" correspond to professional competency-5, professional competency-6, professional competency-7, general professional competency-6, etc. However, the identified reactions do not reflect all 29 competencies declared by the state standard. For example, the list of associative words does not reflect competencies related to project activities (professional competency-8, professional competency-9, and professional competency-10), research activities (professional competency-11, professional competency-12), or cultural and educational activities (professional competency-13, professional competency-14). On the other hand, the experiment showed that future teachers have different ideas about the teaching profession. The ideas do not correspond to the competencies defined by the Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education but are directly related to the work of a teacher. These are also the objects that a teacher constantly uses in the teaching process (red pen, glasses, grade book, etc.); the negative aspects of the profession, including low salary, fatigue, bad nerves, disrespect for the teaching profession, etc.; and associations reflecting the gender situation in Russian education (students associate the teaching profession mostly with women), and so on. The discrepancy that we have noted is, firstly, due to the fact that students are probably not familiar with all the requirements for bachelor's degree holders and do not realize their importance. Secondly, university students, unlike the developers of the Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education, have recently graduated from school. Therefore, they know better what school students expect from teachers compared to officials from the Ministry of Education. Having started work at school, young specialists face the fact that their ideas about teaching activities are at odds with the requirements for school employees.

The methodological paradigm described in the study is the comparative analysis of the teacher image characteristics in normative documents and the minds of student teachers, that is, future teachers. The results may be further applied in international practice. At the same time, the main stages of the associative experiment can be implemented in future research, in particular, the analysis of the most frequent associative words and their thematic groups.

This study contributes to modern education since it allows student teachers to better understand the perception of the teacher's image. In addition, student teachers may use the present study to investigate the differences between normative documents and students' ideas about the characteristics of the teacher. The findings can be useful for improving the training of future teachers and creating professional development programs for practicing teachers.

Firstly, the research contributes to the study of the younger generation's preferences; namely, the requirements of schoolchildren for a perfect teacher, the teacher image formation in the minds of children, and the expected qualities of a teacher. Subsequently, it may be possible to form the competencies that the teacher is required to comply with. Secondly, it seems feasible to study the dynamics of the teacher image described in the Federal State Educational Standards in the context of different generations in order to track changes in the ideas of the Federal State Educational Standard developers about the teacher job and identify the reasons for these changes. A comparative analysis of the indicators of an associative experiment involving students from different countries can compare the features of national education systems and show their effect on the formation of a teacher image in the minds of student teachers. In addition, students of

other humanities can be involved in the experiment to identify the impact of having a degree in Pedagogy and studying at a pedagogical university on the formation of the teacher image in the minds of students.

The linguistic anthropology approach utilized in this study aimed to uncover the intricate socio-cultural dynamics, discursive practices, and linguistic intricacies that influence how students interpret teachers. By employing this approach, the research team delved into the subjective and culturally influenced dimensions of teacher image interpretation, which had not received sufficient attention in prior research efforts.

The findings from the associative experiment provide insights into the socio-cultural aspects of teacher image interpretation within the framework of linguistic anthropology. By examining the associations that student teachers have with the stimulus word "teacher", the study uncovers the cultural meanings, values, and expectations that shape their perceptions of the teaching profession. Linguistic anthropology recognizes that language and communication are embedded in social and cultural contexts, influencing how individuals construct and interpret meaning. In the context of teacher image interpretation, the associations revealed through the experiment reflect the cultural representations and social constructions surrounding the teaching profession. By examining the associations through a linguistic anthropology lens, the study uncovers the cultural meanings and social constructions that underlie student teachers' interpretations of the teacher image. It reveals the complex interplay between language, culture, and education, demonstrating how language use and linguistic choices reflect and reinforce broader social and cultural dynamics.

Finally, the findings from the associative experiment contribute to the understanding of the socio-cultural aspects of teacher image interpretation. They emphasize the importance of considering cultural meanings, values, and societal expectations in shaping student teachers' perceptions of the teaching profession. This aligns with the core principles of linguistic anthropology, which seek to explore the interconnections between language, culture, and society and shed light on how linguistic practices shape and are shaped by social and cultural contexts.

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