

**OPEN ACCESS**

SUBMITTED 03 January 2025

ACCEPTED 05 February 2025

PUBLISHED 11 March 2025

VOLUME Vol.05 Issue03 2025

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Competency-Based Approach in Professional Development of Educators

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Abstract: The development of the modern knowledge society demands continuous improvement and enhancement of the knowledge, skills, and abilities of educators. A highly relevant approach in education today is the competency-based approach, which aims at the creative and effective development of pedagogical mastery within the framework of professional development. For educators, an individual trajectory of competency development becomes crucial. This depends on their field of activity, personal preferences, and modern innovations. The article presents and analyzes the system of competencies for language instructors that contribute to the effective construction of the educational process in universities and the acquisition of relevant experience by students.

Keywords: Innovations, competencies, competency-based approach, philological disciplines.

Introduction: One of the main trends in the development of education in the 21st century is the formation of a knowledge society, where acquiring and processing new information, increasing professional skills, and social integration are the ways to economic, social, cultural, and democratic development. The key task of education in this society is to teach individuals how to learn, not only for a specific period but continuously throughout their lives. The term "finished education" is not relevant in a knowledge society, as a modern specialist must constantly acquire new skills and improve existing ones, attending various courses and training aimed at enhancing competencies. We support the opinion of O. Vladislavlev [1], who states that "the higher the educational level of people, the more actively they strive to continue their education." Moreover, education not only satisfies and develops the professional and spiritual needs of specialists but also stimulates the development of new ones.

Thus, in the field of education, there is a tendency of

increasing educational needs, which becomes a powerful mechanism for the development of the postgraduate education system as a whole and professional development in particular.

The conceptual idea of this approach is to replace traditional reproductive education with creative education, which will contribute to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, personal development, the formation of a system of socio-cultural needs, self-realization, and self-improvement. By competence, we mean the ability to adequately and quickly integrate and mobilize the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values to effectively (i.e., with ease, accuracy, and adaptability) solve a professional practice problem in a specific context and in a complex situation typical for educators. Mastery of certain competencies helps eliminate contradictions between theoretical knowledge and practical activity. Given this, mastering the correct combination of competencies and choosing one's development trajectory allows an individual to achieve professional and social realization.

The update of educational content and the development of new state standards are inseparably connected with the competency-based approach to the professional development of teachers. To be competent, in our opinion, means to simultaneously, comprehensively, and holistically mobilize knowledge, skills, and motivations in a specific situation in accordance with the context. Taking this into account, it is necessary to define the circle of competencies that a modern teacher of philological disciplines should possess.

A significant number of scholars have studied various problems related to the professional development of teachers: L. Bezglasnaya, V. Titarenko, V. Demidenko focused on the content characteristics of key teacher competencies; A. Bodalev, K. Danilova, V. Oleinik, I. Lerner, A. Markova, M. Skatkin dedicated their works to analyzing the development of professional competencies of educators within the framework of methodological work.

It is important to note that the problem of developing the competencies of philology teachers within the system of professional development has not been sufficiently addressed, which has determined the choice of the topic of this study.

The goal of this article is to develop the main directions for improving the qualifications of teachers of philological disciplines based on the competency-based approach.

MAIN PART

The professional development plan for language and literature teachers involves identifying the key components of the teacher's personality model.

This refers to both the general and professional competencies of teachers (see Figure 1). We consider them from the perspective of the modern teacher's activities and the area of its implementation.

General competencies refer to those that apply to every teacher. Subject-specific or professional competencies refer exclusively to the professional competencies in a particular field. In our opinion, it is the combination of competencies of the teacher, as presented in Figure 1, that will contribute to the development of corresponding competencies in the participants of the educational process. It should be noted that the existing competency system must be updated according to the personality of each teacher of philological disciplines, as this depends on the professional interests of the teacher.

Let's start by analyzing the key competencies of teachers of philological disciplines. These include:

- Methodological (lingvopedagogical) competence – This refers to the ability to plan and organize an innovative educational process, the ability to plan and evaluate its implementation. This competence is used by the teacher in the following ways: developing educational programs and teaching strategies that promote the effective flow of the learning process, creatively solving tasks; choosing innovative forms and methods of teaching; using didactic materials that help teach and knowledge that promotes students' experience, helping them understand specific subject concepts, research, collaborate, discuss, etc.
- Management competence – This refers to the ability to use a wide range of strategies to organize a student audience and contribute to their learning and education. Classroom management strives to build relationships with students on a basis of trust; dynamic management of the teacher with the group or small groups of participants in the educational process helps to optimally overcome conflicts; adapting the teacher's practice to the characteristics of the audience, the learning situation to create opportunities for learning and internal motivation of students; organizing space, time, and the educational collective for successful learning, interaction, and communication; analyzing the choice of the optimal organizational-pedagogical system.
- Monitoring competence – This is the ability to assess the results of students' academic activities in accordance with regulatory requirements with the aim of improving the educational process and one's own pedagogical activity. Competence is realized by using various assessment methods, strategies, and tools for

improving the ways of acquiring knowledge; adapting assessment methods to the individual characteristics of each student; informing parents about the results and progress of students' academic activities, as well as the difficulties they encounter in the learning process.

- Inclusive competence – This refers to the ability to pay attention to the special needs of students with physical and mental development challenges, ensuring equality among students during the educational process. This competence focuses on using various educational and sociological strategies to prevent the isolation and discrimination of students, ensuring equal opportunities for all students; regulating educational actions aimed at overcoming learning barriers and promoting self-education; identifying and supporting students facing behavioral, emotional, or socio-economic difficulties, and collaborating with government services and professionals to support specific educational needs.
- Social competence – This is the ability to establish effective relationships with parents, collaborate with colleagues, and engage with other public institutions. The teacher's social openness helps establish a partnership with parents when making decisions about their children's success and well-being; developing professional collaboration with colleagues (sharing knowledge and pedagogical experience), the ability to work in a team, and seek professional support when needed; collaborating with community organizations to promote the educational goals of students, and so on.
- Reflective competence – This refers to the ability for professional self-reflection and continuous professional development during pedagogical activities. This competence is aimed at analysis, self-assessment, and feedback from colleagues regarding the teacher's professionalism, improvement, and development. During their work, the teacher engages in self-reflection, identifies their learning needs, analyzes, evaluates, and plans their career, self-regulates the continuous deepening of pedagogical and professional knowledge, skills, and abilities, conducts innovative research, and develops projects related to educational activities.
- Information and communication competence – This refers to the ability to use information and communication technologies, as well as social networks, to form skills in effective communication and information exchange (knowledge sharing). Educators implement this competence by selecting necessary ICT tools in line with educational goals, ethically and safely using social networks in

educational activities as a managed system for obtaining and transmitting information, and promoting knowledge acquisition among students using information and communication technologies.

- Linguistic competence – This refers to the ability to apply knowledge of language (morphology, syntax, text style, and speech culture) and its norms, the ability to operate linguistic knowledge in professional activities, analyze basic linguistic processes, and so on.
- Literary competence – This refers to knowledge of the history and patterns of literary development, the ability to understand both the hidden and explicit meanings of words in a text, the ability to demonstrate knowledge through quoting and summarizing, the ability to distinguish values and perspectives expressed in works of art, the ability to relate the text to external paradigms, such as history or society, develop students' linguistic abilities, creativity in perception, the ability to recognize the leitmotifs of a text, plot, and so on.
- Cultural competence – This is the ability to mobilize intercultural interaction in one's own pedagogical activities, to differentiate and critically evaluate another language culture, and to demonstrate tolerance in an intercultural professional environment. This competence helps to form a humanistic worldview, an understanding of national traditions, realities, customs, and spiritual values; it also helps to develop effective communication skills, engage in discussions, and share ideas.
- Research competence – This is a comprehensive personal-professional quality of a specialist that reflects the motivation for scientific inquiry, mastery of the methodology of pedagogical research, and the personal qualities of the researcher, such as unconventional thinking, the ability to approach problems creatively and innovatively.
- Lifelong learning – This competence is related to self-organization in learning, motivation to continuously acquire new knowledge, and the implementation of innovative methods in practice. It also includes the ability to independently search for and assess the educational and scientific significance of information, and more.
- Innovative and creative competence – This refers to the ability to generate original ideas, solve learning situations quickly, think flexibly, and break free from professional activity templates.

Thus, the competencies analyzed above form a unique system of knowledge, skills, and abilities that a modern teacher of philological disciplines should possess. The development of teacher competencies in the process of professional growth facilitates the acquisition of new

information in the field of subject teaching methodologies, the development of models for solving learning situations, and the effective engagement of students in acquiring knowledge, independent search, and forming their own relevant competencies.

RESULTS

The acquisition of new information is facilitated by various forms of learning, which should focus not on passive information acquisition, but on active interaction and the practical development of the teacher's professional skills.

The most popular forms of learning today include interactive lectures, seminars, independent work, workshops, training sessions, conferences, webinars, and round tables. Let us analyze the appropriateness of using these learning formats for professional development.

Lectures remain an immensely popular form of learning in formal education. In adult education, students are taught interactive lectures instead of traditional ones that are purely informational. A positive aspect of such a lecture is that it allows for the integration of collective knowledge and experience, broadens the perspectives of the participants, deepens the understanding of the problem, and defines the content and pacing of the material delivery according to the audience's specific needs.

Preparing such lectures is a painstaking process. Based on the topic, the lecturer chooses a problematic issue that the listeners are somewhat familiar with, identifies new ways to solve it, and forecasts potential discussions that may arise during the acquisition of new knowledge. An interactive lecture should be closely aligned with the students' needs, enriched not only with new information but also with examples, and encourage the exchange of experiences, development of analytical thinking, and personal approaches and evaluations of professional situations.

The main features of professional communication between the teacher and students in professional development courses during an interactive lecture are: the teacher acts as a conversational partner, striving to share knowledge and experience; the teacher is interested in forming judgments among the students; the lecture is structured around comparing different perspectives on solving educational problems, revealing the essence of conflict resolution; during the presentation of the material, the teacher asks questions, provides answers, encourages students to reflect and find possible solutions, and so on.

A popular form of learning today is also the seminar, which aims to delve into significant and typical

problems of professional activity. The effectiveness of seminar sessions lies in the following aspects: focusing attention only on specific, core issues of the topic; creating an atmosphere of free expression of thoughts, overcoming the fear of making mistakes when discussing any issue; developing the ability to argue one's point of view by supporting it with facts; applying theory to practice when solving situational tasks.

There are many types of seminars that should be used during teacher training courses. In our view, the most effective are: seminar-discussion, seminar-action-game, research seminar, case-seminar, etc. The seminar-discussion is aimed at discussing urgent educational issues that concern teachers and contributes to the development of a general direction for implementing new principles of educational reform. This type of seminar allows us to identify gaps in the understanding of how the educational process works in schools between scholars and practicing teachers, who, due to their experience, can warn against potential problems that may arise from the introduction of theoretical knowledge, developments in events, and provide recommendations on how to avoid them.

The practical game-action seminar involves recreating any pedagogical situation presented by the teacher through psychological role reorientation. This helps activate the thinking activity of teachers, practice non-standard educational situations, overcome communication barriers that arise in groups of unfamiliar people, and develop creativity.

Another widely used method today is case study, which involves a comprehensive analysis of a professional-pedagogical situation, discussed during an open discussion, and helps develop decision-making skills among case study participants.

The advantages of this method include its close alignment with the realities of a teacher's practical activities, the development of the ability to independently and creatively solve situations, and the skill of analyzing and testing one's own views and actions. Case studies differ from seminars and practical sessions primarily in the number of alternative ways to solve a problem and the variety of skills developed.

The main requirements for the content of the case include the presence of: information and a clear description of events that allow for a comprehensive evaluation of the behavior of both the teacher and the students in circumstances that are close to reality; a problem situation that suggests multiple solutions and makes even experienced practitioners think; goals that are achieved through discussion and the analysis of the proposed situation under the guidance of the teacher.

With the help of cloud technologies, participants in professional development courses can familiarize themselves with individual topics related to their professional field, complete individual assignments with a practical focus, write their diploma work, and pass ongoing assessments.

In European countries, project-based technologies in the context of independent work are given significant attention. In our view, this type of activity allows teachers to develop their creative and innovative abilities. It is advisable to use different types of projects, specifically: research projects – which have the structure of a scientific study aimed at analyzing a specific pedagogical problem; informational projects – gathering and processing information on a relevant topic and presenting the results; creative projects – writing various genres of written work, creating films or trailers, filming a lesson, etc.; role-playing – demonstrating written performance, and so on. The successful implementation of these projects is based on the educational institution's focus on the interests and needs of the teacher, who is capable of creating an original educational product that can be used in professional practice. The public orientation and use of the final product become the driving force behind the creative work through the search and research problem-solving process. Therefore, independent work is aimed at deepening knowledge and improving the qualifications of experienced educators. A systematic combination of theoretical material, research work, and assessment of results contributes to updating the content and forms of education and training for youth, as well as critically analyzing the innovative courses offered by the instructor.

Master classes are a short-term form of professional development for teachers. They are an effective way to enhance a teacher's professional skills through the exchange of experience, teaching methods, and creative practices. The advantages of master classes include: practical focus; interactive interaction between participants; and active independent work by teachers. A master class consists of four stages: receiving new information, assimilating it, applying it practically, and reflection. In the first stage, the teacher presents their pedagogical experience on a chosen topic. In the second stage, participants take on the role of students, assimilating the information received. In the next stage, the teachers are divided into groups and develop their own lessons or their elements related to the topic. The final stage is focused on reflection, analysis of the acquired knowledge, and the possibility of applying it in their own professional practice.

CONCLUSION

Recent advancements in science have confirmed that more and more new discoveries, technologies, and progressive ideas depend on the intellectual potential of humans. The development and enrichment of human capital is a priority task for any developed country aiming to take a leading position in the world, build a civil society capable of solving global human challenges, such as environmental pollution, the fight against incurable diseases, the depletion of life-sustaining resources, and so on, with its intellectual capacity, creativity, and perseverance.

Undoubtedly, lifelong learning is the driving force that can contribute to the economic growth and development of a country. New demands on the education system, the creation of personalized educational environments, affect the pedagogical preparation of teachers. The teacher plays a leading role in shaping the personality. They are capable of unlocking the creative potential of students, organizing interactive learning, increasing student interest in the subject, demonstrating the practical application of knowledge, and developing students' skills.

Given the new social demands on the teaching profession, it is essential to focus on teacher professional development courses, which are now built on a competency-based approach. We have identified that the key competencies for teachers of philological disciplines that need to be developed include general competencies (management, monitoring, inclusive, social, reflective, informational-communicative, ethical, communicative, creative, research, lifelong learning) and subject-specific competencies (methodological, literary, cultural, philological, etc.).

The content of training programs facilitates the development of these competencies, which, in our view, should not only address innovative teaching methods but also incorporate the latest technologies to make the educational process modern, interesting, and diverse. We believe the most productive forms of course organization for teachers of philological disciplines include interactive lectures, seminar discussions, educational role-playing seminars, research seminars, case seminars, master classes, workshops, etc. Thus, the variety of forms for organizing and acquiring knowledge, as well as the ability of teachers to choose appropriate educational modules and institutions for professional development, all contribute to developing professional skills, mastering innovative technologies, and applying them in practice, thus educating and nurturing an intellectually rich human capital.

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