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IMPROVING STUDENTS' PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE THROUGH REFLECTIVE TECHNOLOGIES: THE CASE OF THE METHODOLOGY OF TEACHING THE MOTHER TONGUE COURSE

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Abstract The article examines the pedagogical possibilities of improving students' professional competence through reflective technologies in higher education. Special attention is paid to the organization of the educational process in the context of the course "Methodology of Teaching the Mother Tongue." The study emphasizes that reflective activity plays an important role in the formation of students' professional knowledge, practical skills, critical thinking, self-assessment, and readiness for future pedagogical activity. The paper analyzes the essence of reflective technologies and identifies their main types and pedagogical functions. Methods such as reflective diaries, self-assessment, peer assessment, portfolio, pedagogical situations, case studies, discussion, and feedback are considered effective tools for developing students' professional competence. The article also proposes a methodological model for integrating reflective technologies into the process of teaching the methodology of the mother tongue. The results demonstrate that systematic use of reflective technologies contributes to the development of students' ability to analyze their own learning and professional activities, identify strengths and weaknesses, make independent decisions, and continuously improve their professional competence.

Keywords: reflective technologies, professional competence, reflection, higher education, future teacher, mother tongue teaching methodology, self-assessment, pedagogical activity, professional development

Introduction

The modernization of higher education requires the introduction of innovative approaches aimed not only at providing students with theoretical knowledge but also at developing their ability to apply knowledge independently in professional situations. In this regard, the formation and improvement of professional competence among future teachers has become one of the priority tasks of contemporary pedagogical education.

The professional activity of a modern teacher requires a high level of intellectual, methodological, communicative, and reflective competence. A future teacher should be able to analyze educational situations, evaluate the effectiveness of his or her own activities, identify existing problems, and find appropriate solutions. Therefore, reflection is considered one of the essential components of professional development.

The use of reflective technologies in the educational process creates favorable conditions for students to become active participants in their own learning. Through reflection, students gain the opportunity to evaluate their knowledge, skills, achievements, and difficulties. This process contributes to the development of self-awareness, critical thinking, independence, and professional responsibility.

The course "Methodology of Teaching the Mother Tongue" occupies a special place in the professional training of future teachers. This course provides students with theoretical and practical knowledge necessary for organizing effective mother tongue lessons. Therefore, the integration of reflective technologies into the teaching of this course is important for improving students' professional competence.

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Literature Review Reflection has been widely studied in pedagogy and psychology as an important mechanism of personal and professional development. In general, reflection refers to an

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individual's ability to analyze, evaluate, and reconsider his or her own thoughts, actions, experiences, and results.

D. Schön emphasized the importance of reflection in professional activity and introduced the concepts of "reflection-in-action" and "reflection-on-action." According to his approach, professionals improve their competence by analyzing their actions both during and after the activity.

J. Dewey also considered reflective thinking as an important element of effective education. He argued that education should encourage learners to think critically about their experiences and use those experiences for future development.

In contemporary education, reflective technologies are understood as a set of pedagogical methods and tools designed to organize students' self-analysis and self-assessment. These technologies help students become aware of their educational achievements and difficulties and develop strategies for further improvement.

Researchers emphasize that reflective learning has several important functions:

analytical function;
evaluative function;
developmental function;
motivational function;
corrective function;
communicative function.

The implementation of these functions contributes to the formation of a competent and self-developing professional.

Theoretical Foundations of Reflective Technologies Reflective technologies are pedagogical technologies aimed at developing learners' ability to analyze their own educational and professional activities. Unlike traditional approaches, reflective technologies focus not only on the final result but also on the learning process itself.

The main purpose of reflective technologies is to answer several important questions:

What have I learned?
How did I learn it?
What difficulties did I face?
What was successful in my activity?
What should I improve?
How can I use the acquired knowledge in future professional activity?

Such questions encourage students to analyze their own experiences and take responsibility for their learning.

Reflective technologies can be classified into several groups:

1. Individual Reflection

This type of reflection is based on students' independent analysis of their own activities. Reflective diaries, self-assessment questionnaires, and portfolios can be used for this purpose.

2. Group Reflection

Group reflection is organized through discussion, collaborative analysis, peer assessment, and feedback. Students exchange opinions and evaluate the activities of their peers.

3. Professional Reflection

Professional reflection is directly related to the analysis of future pedagogical activity. Students analyze pedagogical situations, teaching methods, lesson plans, and professional decisions.

Reflective Technologies in the Methodology of Teaching the Mother Tongue Course

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The course "Methodology of Teaching the Mother Tongue" is aimed at preparing future teachers to organize effective language education. Students study the principles, methods, forms, and technologies of teaching the mother tongue.

However, the acquisition of theoretical knowledge alone is not sufficient for the development of professional competence. Students should also be able to apply their knowledge in practical situations.

Reflective technologies can contribute to this process in several ways.

Reflective Diary

A reflective diary allows students to record their learning experiences regularly. After each lesson or practical activity, students can answer the following questions:

What new knowledge did I gain?
Which method was most effective?
What difficulties did I experience?
How can I overcome these difficulties?
How can I apply this knowledge in my future teaching practice?

The reflective diary helps students develop the habit of continuous self-analysis.

Self-Assessment

Self-assessment is one of the most important elements of reflective learning. Students evaluate their own knowledge, skills, and professional development.

For example, after preparing a lesson plan on teaching grammar, students can evaluate themselves according to the following criteria:

Criteria	Self-assessment
Ability to define lesson objectives	High / Medium / Low
Selection of teaching methods	High / Medium / Low
Use of interactive technologies	High / Medium / Low
Organization of students' activities	High / Medium / Low
Ability to evaluate learning outcomes	High / Medium / Low

Such assessment enables students to identify areas that require further improvement.

Peer Assessment

Peer assessment creates opportunities for collaborative learning and professional communication. Students analyze the lesson plans, presentations, and teaching activities of their classmates.

The advantages of peer assessment include:
development of analytical thinking;
improvement of communication skills;
formation of objective evaluation skills;
exchange of professional experience;
development of cooperation.

During peer assessment, students should not only identify mistakes but also provide constructive recommendations.

Case Study Technology

Pedagogical situations and case studies can be effectively used to develop students' reflective competence.

For example, students may be given the following situation:

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A teacher notices that students are not actively participating in a mother tongue lesson. The traditional explanation method does not produce the expected results.

Students are asked to analyze the situation and answer the following questions:

What are the possible causes of the problem?

Which teaching methods can be used?

How should the teacher organize students' activities?

What changes should be made to the lesson?

How can the effectiveness of the new approach be evaluated?

Such activities develop students' ability to analyze professional problems and make independent decisions.

Methodological Model for Improving Professional Competence

The process of improving students' professional competence through reflective technologies can be organized in the following stages:

Stage 1. Diagnostic Stage

At this stage, the initial level of students' professional competence is identified. Questionnaires, interviews, observation, and self-assessment methods can be used.

Stage 2. Motivational Stage

Students are introduced to the importance of reflection and its role in professional development. They develop a positive attitude toward self-analysis and continuous learning.

Stage 3. Practical Stage

Various reflective technologies are integrated into the educational process:

reflective diaries;

portfolios;

self-assessment;

peer assessment;

case studies;

pedagogical discussions;

feedback;

project activities.

Stage 4. Analytical Stage

Students analyze the results of their activities and identify their achievements and difficulties.

Stage 5. Corrective Stage

Based on the results of reflection, students develop individual strategies for improving their professional competence.

Pedagogical Conditions for Effective Implementation

The effectiveness of reflective technologies depends on several pedagogical conditions.

First, a student-centered educational environment should be created.

Students should be recognized as active participants in the educational process. They should have opportunities to express their opinions and make independent decisions.

Second, reflection should be systematic.

Reflective activities should not be organized occasionally. They should become an integral part of the educational process.

Third, constructive feedback should be provided.

Teachers should help students understand their strengths and weaknesses without creating negative psychological pressure.

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Fourth, practical activities should be emphasized.

Students should have opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge in simulated and real pedagogical situations.

Fifth, individual differences should be considered.

Each student has different levels of knowledge, experience, motivation, and professional interests. Therefore, reflective activities should take individual characteristics into account.

Results and Discussion

The systematic use of reflective technologies contributes to significant changes in students' educational and professional development.

First, students develop a greater awareness of their own learning processes. They begin to understand how they acquire knowledge and which methods are most effective for them.

Second, students improve their ability to evaluate their own professional activities. This is particularly important for future teachers because pedagogical activity requires continuous self-improvement.

Third, reflective technologies develop critical thinking. Students learn not to accept information passively but to analyze, compare, evaluate, and apply it.

Fourth, students become more independent in solving professional problems. Instead of waiting for ready-made solutions, they learn to identify problems and develop their own strategies.

Finally, reflective technologies increase students' motivation for professional development. Students begin to understand that professional competence is not a fixed result but a continuous process of learning and self-improvement.

Conclusion The development of professional competence among future teachers is closely connected with their ability to analyze and evaluate their own educational and professional activities. Reflective technologies provide effective pedagogical tools for organizing this process.

The integration of reflective diaries, self-assessment, peer assessment, portfolios, case studies, discussions, and feedback into the course "Methodology of Teaching the Mother Tongue" contributes to the development of students' professional competence.

Reflective technologies enable students to:

analyze their educational experiences;

evaluate their professional achievements;

identify existing difficulties;

develop critical thinking;

improve independent decision-making skills;

apply theoretical knowledge in practical situations;

develop strategies for continuous professional growth.

Therefore, the systematic use of reflective technologies should be considered an important direction in improving the professional training of future teachers. The proposed methodological approach can contribute to the development of competent, reflective, creative, and professionally responsible teachers who are capable of meeting the requirements of modern education.

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