

COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH: TRANSFORMING ASSESSMENT IN EDUCATION

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Abstract

This article discusses the growing popularity of the competency-based approach in education, which emphasizes students' demonstration of their skills and knowledge rather than the formal completion of academic courses. Strategies for rethinking assessment are discussed, aimed at accurately reflecting learners' competencies in real-life situations, as well as methods that foster a deeper understanding of learners' competencies and knowledge. As well as methods that promote a deeper understanding of their abilities and readiness for professional practice.

Keywords: Competency-based approach, education, skills, knowledge, assessment, competencies, formative process, educational strategies, engagement, professional practice.

Introduction

In recent years, there has been a growing popularization of the competency-based approach, which emphasizes the demonstration of skills and knowledge rather than the formal completion of courses. This approach implies the need to rethink assessment strategies in order to ensure that they accurately reflect learners' competencies in the context of real-life situations. The educational sphere is in a state of constant development, which naturally entails changes in the methods of assessing learning outcomes. The competency-based approach has become a key element transforming the focus from traditional indicators to a deeper reflection of learners' abilities.

The basis of the competency-based approach is the principle that assessment should be a continuous formative process embedded in the educational process. In this context, special attention is paid to the need to align assessment criteria with clearly defined competencies adapted to the requirements of specific industries and society as a whole. Assessment in the framework of competence-based learning is aimed not only at identifying the scope of students' knowledge, but also at assessing their ability to apply this knowledge in practical situations [1]. In order to implement this approach, a variety of assessment techniques, including practical assignments, portfolios and simulations, are used to promote a comprehensive understanding of the learning process. While the competency-based approach provides a more appropriate assessment of learners' abilities, it also poses a number of challenges. Institutions are faced with overcoming barriers related to accreditation, standardization and the development of



reliable assessment tools[2]. Nevertheless, the potential benefits, such as increased student engagement, make these challenges relevant to finding a solution. The competency-based approach is based on the principle that education should be more personalized and assessments should reflect individual student growth. Proponents of this approach argue that it provides a more accurate representation of students' abilities and readiness to perform [3].

Researchers express a variety of opinions regarding the implementation of the competency-based approach. Ivanov A. and Petrova S. substantiate its holistic nature, arguing that this approach promotes a deeper understanding of learners' abilities[4]. Hume P., Norris W. and Powell A. argue that in the absence of careful design, the competency approach can be subject to subjective interpretations and requires thorough testing to guarantee its reliability[5].

Implementing a competency-based approach involves identifying key competencies and developing assessment tools to evaluate competence in these areas. Methods may include performance-oriented tasks, modeling, and direct observation of competencies. The goal is to create an assessment system that reflects the competencies required for students' future professional practice.

The competency-based approach is valuable for its emphasis on practical skills and for its ability to foster a culture of continuous improvement among learners. However, challenges such as the need for reliable assessment tools and training teachers in competency-based methodology remain significant barriers to its widespread adoption [6].

Teachers modify the educational process according to the established competencies, while learners actively monitor and guide their own learning [7]. This involves participation in both formative and summative assessment, thus ensuring that each learner is actively involved in the assessment process.

In the European context, the Bologna Process has played a significant role in promoting competency-based learning across the continent [8].

Research on competency-based approaches examines best practices in developing, maintaining, and expanding competency-based education (CBE) programs [9]. These studies provide valuable information on the effective implementation of competency-based approaches by demonstrating successful strategies and lessons learned from various educational institutions. Technologies act as the cornerstone of the implementation of this approach, offering innovative solutions for personalized learning trajectories. They provide in-depth data collection and analysis, enabling educators to assess the progress of individual learners and facilitating the evaluation of competencies through digital tools such as e-portfolios and learning analytics. These technologies facilitate transparent documentation of competencies and help personalize learning.

The perspectives of the competency-based approach imply its constant evolution and adaptation to meet the changing needs of learners and labor market demands. This includes the development of new technologies and the creation of a more flexible educational environment, paying special attention to the formation of professional communities of learners, the development of clear theories of change and the improvement of competency-based learning practices[10].



In conclusion, the competency-based approach, which has become increasingly popular in recent years, focuses on learners' practices and skills, which allows for a better assessment of their abilities in real-life situations. This approach requires a revision of assessment methods and emphasizes the importance of integrating formative assessment into the educational process. However, its implementation is accompanied by a number of challenges, such as the need to develop reliable assessment tools and teacher training, which should be taken into account in its implementation. Harmonization of assessment criteria with the requirements of specific competencies is also a key element to achieve adequacy of assessment. Thus, despite the existing difficulties, the competency-based approach can significantly improve the quality of education by offering a more individualized approach to learning. Effective application of this approach requires careful study of successful experiences and recommendations of contemporary researchers in the field.

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