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INTEGRATION OF THEORY AND PRACTICE IN PEDAGOGICAL TRAINING: IMPACT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF KEY COMPETENCIES

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Abstract
The article examines the integration of theoretical and practical components in pedagogical training as the most important factor in the development of key competencies of future teachers. Modern forms and methods of integration are analyzed, such as educational and industrial practice, pedagogical cases, simulations, micro-teaching, project activities, internships and mentoring. Particular attention is paid to assessing the effectiveness of these methods in developing professional skills and reflective abilities. The results of the study confirm that a systematic approach to combining theory and practice helps prepare competitive teachers who are ready to solve professional problems in the conditions of the modern educational space.

Keywords: Teacher training, integration of theory and practice, key competencies, teaching practice, micro-teaching, project work, mentoring, professional development.

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Introduction

The modern system of pedagogical education faces the need to prepare highly qualified specialists who are able to effectively respond to the changing requirements of the educational environment. One of the key areas of improving pedagogical training is the integration of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, ensuring the development of key professional competencies of future teachers. The relevance of this topic is due to the growing need for teachers who have not only a theoretical base, but also practical skills necessary to solve real professional problems in the conditions of a modern school.

The object of the research is the process of professional training of future teachers.
The subject of the research is the integration of theoretical and practical components in pedagogical training as a factor in the formation of key competencies.

The aim of the research is to identify the features of the integration of theory and practice in the process of pedagogical training and to determine its impact on the development of key professional competencies.

Research objectives:

1. To analyze the theoretical and methodological foundations of the formation of key competencies in pedagogical education;
2. To characterize modern approaches to the integration of theoretical and practical training;
3. To determine the effectiveness of integrative models of teacher training;
4. To develop recommendations for improving the integration of theory and practice in the pedagogical process.

A brief overview of the state of the problem in modern pedagogy shows that, despite the widespread recognition of the importance of practice-oriented learning, in many educational institutions there remains a gap between the theoretical and practical components of training. The lack of systemic integration leads to the formation of fragmented knowledge and insufficient readiness for pedagogical activity. Modern researchers (V.A.Slastenin, I.Ya.Lerner, E.N.Shiyan, etc.) emphasize the need to create a holistic training model in which theory and practice are considered as complementary elements of the educational process.

Research methods include theoretical analysis of scientific and methodological literature, comparative and contrastive method, questionnaires and interviews with teachers and students, as well as generalization of teaching experience.

The integration of theoretical and practical training is a necessary condition for the formation of key competencies of a future teacher, such as communicative, methodological, information-digital, reflexive, and others. Various forms and methods of training help to overcome the gap between knowledge and action, contributing to the formation of holistic professional thinking in students.

Examples of used forms: One of the traditional and mandatory forms of practical training in pedagogical universities remains **educational and industrial practice**. Educational practice, as a rule, is aimed at initial acquaintance with the professional environment, observation of the educational process, analysis of documentation and participation in extracurricular activities. Industrial practice already assumes more active involvement in pedagogical activity: preparation and conducting lessons, conducting class management, participation in the methodological work of the school.

In addition to these core activities, industrial practice provides future teachers with opportunities to develop critical skills such as classroom management, student assessment, and the implementation of diverse teaching strategies tailored to varying student needs. During this period, students often receive guidance and feedback from experienced mentors, which helps them refine their pedagogical approaches and address real-world challenges. Moreover, the practice encourages reflection on one's professional development, fostering a deeper understanding of the teacher's role not only as an instructor but also as a mentor, counselor, and community member.

Furthermore, this hands-on experience is essential for bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge acquired at the university and practical application in schools. It enables students

to become familiar with the administrative and organizational aspects of educational institutions, including curriculum planning, record-keeping, and collaboration with colleagues and parents. The immersive nature of industrial practice often leads to the development of professional networks and a stronger sense of professional identity, which are invaluable as graduates transition into their teaching careers.

Overall, educational and industrial practices serve as a fundamental component of teacher training, ensuring that future educators are well-prepared, adaptable, and capable of meeting the evolving demands of the modern educational landscape.

A supplement to classical forms are **pedagogical cases**, in which students analyze and solve real or simulated professional situations. This method allows practicing decision-making skills, developing pedagogical tact and the ability to act in conditions of uncertainty. Additionally, working with pedagogical cases fosters critical thinking and reflective practice by encouraging students to evaluate multiple perspectives and anticipate the consequences of their actions. Through collaborative discussion and role-playing, students learn to communicate effectively with colleagues, students, and parents, which is essential for creating a supportive learning environment.

Moreover, pedagogical cases expose students to ethical dilemmas and complex interpersonal dynamics that are often encountered in educational settings but may not be fully covered in theoretical coursework. This experiential learning approach helps future teachers to build resilience and flexibility, equipping them to respond sensitively and professionally to diverse classroom challenges. By integrating case analysis into the curriculum, pedagogical universities enhance the preparedness of their students, ensuring that they are not only knowledgeable but also capable of applying their skills creatively and responsibly in real-world teaching contexts.

Simulations and microteaching are modeling of fragments of the pedagogical process with subsequent analysis. These forms allow you to try out pedagogical techniques in a safe environment, analyze your own actions, and receive feedback from teachers and classmates. Microteaching is especially effective in the early stages of training, as it helps build confidence and develop professional reflection.

In addition, simulations provide an opportunity to replicate complex classroom scenarios that may be difficult to encounter regularly during traditional practice, such as managing disruptive behavior, addressing diverse learning needs, or responding to unexpected situations. This controlled setting enables students to experiment with different strategies, make mistakes, and refine their approaches without the risk of negative consequences for real students. The iterative process of practice, feedback, and revision fosters a deeper understanding of effective teaching methods and classroom dynamics.

Furthermore, both simulations and microteaching promote active learning and engagement, encouraging students to take responsibility for their professional growth. These methods also facilitate peer learning, as observing and discussing others' teaching performances broadens perspectives and highlights a variety of instructional styles. Over time, repeated participation

in microteaching and simulations enhances communication skills, adaptability, and emotional resilience—qualities essential for successful educators.

Integrating these innovative forms into pedagogical training programs helps bridge theory and practice, making teacher preparation more dynamic and responsive to the challenges of modern education. Ultimately, simulations and microteaching prepare future teachers not only to deliver content effectively but also to create inclusive, supportive, and well-managed classroom environments.

Interactive methods and technologies: Modern approaches to pedagogical training involve the active use of interactive methods. Among them are:

• **Project activities**, in which students develop and implement their own educational projects. This approach promotes the development of research, organizational and analytical competencies.

• **Internships in schools,** including participation in federal and regional programs of pedagogical classes, provide an opportunity to immerse yourself in the real conditions of school life, to master the functional responsibilities of a teacher in cooperation with experienced teachers.

• **Mentoring**, when a student is assigned an experienced teacher-mentor, who provides guidance and professional support. This helps to individualize training, reduce stress levels when entering practice, and more quickly develop professional thinking.

Digital forms of practice are also becoming increasingly widespread, including **virtual simulations of teaching situations, online mentoring,** as well as the use of **digital portfolios and reflective diaries**, which contribute to the systematization of professional experience and its analytical understanding.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of such methods: The effectiveness of integrated forms of training is assessed both on the basis of formal indicators (assessments in practice, project defense) and through the analysis of the development of key competencies. Research shows that the inclusion of students in active and meaningful forms of pedagogical activity increases the level of their professional readiness, confidence, ability for self-assessment and reflection. Thus, according to surveys of students of pedagogical universities, participation in project activities and micro-teaching allows one to better understand the specifics of the profession, learn to plan the educational process and build pedagogical interaction. Mentoring, in turn, helps to adapt to the real requirements of the profession and forms attitudes towards professional self-development.

Many researchers note that it is the complex combination of various forms and methods - from traditional practice to digital simulations and project work - that provides the greatest effect in preparing a competitive and motivated teacher.

Conclusion:

The integration of theory and practice in the process of pedagogical training is a key factor in the formation of professionally significant competencies in future teachers. Only with a

meaningful combination of theoretical knowledge and practical activities is it possible to realize the holistic professional development of the teacher's personality.

The considered forms and methods — educational and industrial practice, pedagogical cases, simulations, micro-teaching, project activities, mentoring and internships — allow not only to form professional skills, but also to develop a reflective position, critical thinking, the ability for self-analysis and professional self-development. The effectiveness of these methods is confirmed by both the results of empirical studies and the positive dynamics in the level of formation of key competencies among students of pedagogical universities.

Thus, to improve the quality of pedagogical education, it is necessary to systematically implement an integrative approach, in which theory and practice are considered not as separate stages, but as interrelated and equivalent components of the educational process. This will allow us to prepare teachers who are ready for the challenges of the modern educational environment and capable of continuous professional growth.

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