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PREPARATION OF FUTURE ENGLISH TEACHERS IN THE CONTEXT OF COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION

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Abstract. In the era of globalization, one of the main priorities of higher pedagogical education is the preparation of teaching staff with competitive, creative and professional competencies. In particular, the strengthening of the position of English as a means of international communication has formed new requirements for the preparation of future English teachers. Therefore, the competency-based education model involves the development of practical skills, communicative flexibility, digital literacy and intercultural competencies. The article examines the theoretical and methodological foundations of the competency-based approach, analyzes its role in the professional and methodological training of future English language teachers. Comparative-pedagogical, analytical and descriptive methods were used during the research, and international scientific sources and modern pedagogical approaches were systematically studied. Competency-based education has a significant impact on the development of students' independent thinking, reflective analysis, communicative activity and pedagogical decision-making skills. At the same time, the article examines the role of innovative teaching methods, digital technologies and interactive activities in teacher training from a scientific perspective.

Key words: competency-based education, English language teaching, professional competence, methodological preparation, communicative approach, digital pedagogy, intercultural competence.

Introduction. Structural changes in the education system in the 21st century have necessitated the application of new approaches to the content and organization of teacher training. The teacher performs the function of a pedagogical leader who manages the learning process, uses innovative methods, and forms creative and critical thinking in students. These changes are especially pronounced in the field of training foreign language teachers.

The main goal of training English teachers is the complex formation of communicative, social, cultural, methodological and professional competencies of future teachers. In modern educational conditions, a teacher is required not only to know grammatical rules and lexical material, but also to apply this knowledge flexibly and effectively in various pedagogical situations. Therefore, ensuring the interaction between theoretical knowledge and practical activity in the teacher training process is of particular importance.

In the philosophy of education, the concept of “competence” is characterized as an integrative system of knowledge, skills, personal qualities, values and practical activity components. Competence expresses the ability to purposefully and creatively apply knowledge in real professional activity conditions. According to this approach, the student is not a passive recipient of information in the learning process, but an active participant who analyzes problems and makes independent decisions.

Literature review. The issue of competency-based education occupies a prominent place in modern pedagogical and linguodidactic science. Researchers view the training of future English language teachers as a comprehensive process aimed at developing professional, communicative, digital, and intercultural competencies.

The theoretical foundations of linguistic competence were laid in the works of Chomsky (1965), who viewed linguistic ability as a system of knowledge underlying speech activity. The development of this concept is linked to the research of Hymes (1972), who introduced the concept of communica-

tive competence and emphasized the need for effective language use in specific social and cultural contexts. These ideas became the foundation of modern communicative methods of foreign language teaching.

Richards (2006) noted that communicative teaching focuses not only on the acquisition of grammatical rules but also on the development of practical communication skills. Issues of intercultural competence were further developed in the works of Byram (1997), who identified intercultural communicative competence as a crucial component of foreign language teacher training.

The psychological and pedagogical aspects of the competency-based approach are examined in the research of Piaget (1972), who places particular emphasis on the cognitive development of the individual and the active learning process. Modern international educational documents also emphasize the importance of key competencies. For example, the European Commission (2018) identifies communicative, digital, and social competencies as key components of lifelong learning.

Issues of digital pedagogy and the development of ICT competencies in teachers are reflected in UNESCO documents (2018), which emphasize the need to integrate digital technologies into the educational process. In Azerbaijani pedagogical science, the issue of the competency-based approach is explored by Ahmadov (2019), who analyzes the pedagogical characteristics of competency-based learning and its impact on the professional development of future teachers.

Thus, an analysis of the scientific literature shows that competency-based education is viewed as the most important foundation for preparing modern English teachers capable of functioning effectively in the context of globalization, digitalization, and intercultural communication.

The purpose of this article is to explore the specifics of training future English language teachers in a competency-based education environment, as well as to analyze the role of professional, communicative, digital, and intercultural competencies in developing modern teachers. Furthermore, the article aims to determine the role of innovative teaching methods and digital technologies in improving the effectiveness of professional and methodological training for future English language teachers.

Main text. The competency-based approach is aimed at developing students' skills in reflective thinking, analytical analysis and creative approach. In such a model, future teachers not only learn ready-made methodological schemes, but also are able to form innovative solutions suitable for various pedagogical situations. This approach expands their professional adaptation capabilities and creates conditions for flexible adaptation to the changing educational environment.

The importance of the competency-based approach in the field of foreign language teaching is especially great. Because an English teacher is not only a language teacher, but also performs the function of a pedagogical leader who organizes the communication process, promotes intercultural dialogue and forms independent learning skills in students. The teacher must take into account the individual characteristics of students, increase their motivation and organize the teaching process based on interactive methods.

In this context, communicative competence is considered one of the main components of future teacher training. The teacher must be able to use the language functionally in various communicative situations, create an effective communication environment between students and activate their speech activity. In addition, methodological competence is related to the teacher's correct choice of teaching strategies, application of modern pedagogical technologies and effective organization of the teaching process.

The formation of intercultural competence is also of particular relevance in the context of globalization. Since English is an international means of communication, teachers must form a sense of tolerance, multicultural thinking and respect for cultural diversity in students. This requires future teachers to have socio-cultural knowledge.

In recent years, the reforms implemented in the European higher education area, the Bologna process and international education standards have made the application of the competency-based model

even more relevant. The main goal of this approach is to prepare teachers who meet the requirements of the labor market, have flexible thinking and are ready for professional activity (European Commission, 2018).

The rapid development of digital technologies in recent times has necessitated the formation of new competencies in the teacher training system. The integration of information and communication technologies into the field of education has had a serious impact on the content, methods and organizational forms of the training process. In these circumstances, foreign language teachers are required not only to have high language skills, but also to be digitally literate, technologically agile and able to use innovative pedagogical approaches. A modern teacher must be able to use various digital platforms, manage online and hybrid learning environments, and select and apply electronic resources in accordance with pedagogical goals.

Especially in the post-pandemic period, the widespread use of distance and blended learning models has further increased the importance of teachers' digital competencies. Foreign language teachers must be able to organize interactive lessons on platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, Moodle, create a virtual communication environment and ensure the active participation of students. These technologies allow for a more flexible, accessible and student-oriented organization of the teaching process.

Digital technologies also expand the possibilities of personalized learning. Through electronic resources and adaptive platforms, teachers can take into account the individual learning pace of students, prepare tasks tailored to their academic needs, and provide continuous feedback. This has a positive impact on the development of students' independent learning skills and self-management competencies.

In modern pedagogical reality, digital technologies require teachers not only to have technical knowledge, but also to be able to integrate technology with pedagogical goals. Technology should not be an end in itself in the teaching process, but rather a means to improve the quality of learning. In this regard, teachers should correctly assess the methodological capabilities of digital tools and direct them to the development of students' communicative, critical, and creative thinking skills.

The competency-based approach is considered an effective pedagogical model that meets these requirements. This model forms not only the theoretical knowledge of future teachers, but also their skills for practical activity in a digital environment. Competency-based training allows students to use technology creatively, develop innovative pedagogical solutions, and flexibly adapt to the changing educational environment. In the context of digital transformation, the competency-based approach acts as one of the main directions of modern teacher training.

The competency-based education model has become one of the important directions in pedagogical theory since the end of the 20th century. The main idea of this approach is that students should not only acquire theoretical knowledge, but also gain the ability to apply that knowledge in practical situations.

Although the concept of "competence" put forward by Noam Chomsky was initially presented as a theoretical model of language ability, it later acquired a broader meaning in pedagogical science. In modern pedagogical approaches, competence is characterized as the integrative application of knowledge, skills, experience and personal qualities during professional activity (Khutorskoy, 2003).

Dell Hymes explains communicative competence as the ability to use language units appropriately in specific social and cultural conditions. According to the researcher, the speaker must know not only "what to say", but also "where", "how", "to whom" and "in what situation" to speak (Hymes, 1972). This approach has increased the importance of communicative activity, authentic situations and interactive teaching methods in foreign language teaching.

The formation of communicative competence is of particular relevance in the process of training modern English teachers. Because the teacher is not only a person who teaches language rules, but

also performs the function of a facilitator who organizes the communicative activity of students, develops their speech skills and creates a real communication environment. In this regard, it is considered important for future teachers to apply various communicative strategies, use student-oriented approaches and be able to build an interactive pedagogical environment.

Michael Byram, on the other hand, evaluates the formation of intercultural communicative competence as one of the main goals of foreign language education. According to the researcher, a language learner should not only acquire linguistic knowledge, but also be able to understand the culture, value system, behavioral models and communicative norms of other peoples (Byram, 1997). Byram includes tolerance, empathy, respect for cultural differences and the ability to communicate effectively with representatives of different cultures in the structure of intercultural competence.

In the conditions of globalization and international academic cooperation, these competencies are of particular importance for future English teachers. A modern teacher must operate in a multicultural educational environment, form a culture of respect for cultural diversity and open communication in students. For this reason, teaching subjects related to intercultural communication, multicultural education and communicative methodology in higher pedagogical educational institutions is considered one of the important directions of professional teacher training.

Constructivist learning theory is also considered one of the methodological foundations of the competency-based model. According to the constructivist approach, the student does not receive knowledge ready-made, but forms it himself in the process of activity and experience (Piaget, 1972). This principle increases the importance of practical activities and reflective analysis in teacher training.

An English teacher must have multidisciplinary professional competencies. These competencies are not limited to language knowledge, but include methodological, technological, psychological and intercultural skills.

One of the most important competencies is communicative competence. The communicative approach is aimed at developing students' real communication skills in foreign language teaching. Jack C. Richards characterizes the communicative learning model as an interactive pedagogical system based on the functional use of language (Richards, 2006).

Methodological competence is also considered one of the main indicators in teacher training. A teacher must be able to choose various teaching methods, determine strategies in accordance with learning objectives, and effectively organize the teaching process. Problem-based learning, project method, collaborative learning, and reflective approach are widely used in modern pedagogical practice.

Digital competence has become an integral part of teacher activity in modern times. The document "ICT Competency Framework for Teachers" prepared by UNESCO emphasizes that teachers' digital literacy is one of the main components of educational quality (UNESCO, 2018).

Intercultural competence is of great importance in the global educational environment. Since English is an international means of communication, teachers must form a sense of tolerance, multicultural thinking, and respect for cultural diversity in students. This competence creates conditions for students to adapt to the international academic and social environment.

The competency-based education model is considered one of the modern pedagogical approaches that necessitates the systematic and purposeful application of innovative teaching technologies. The main goal of this model is not only the transfer of theoretical knowledge, but also the development of students' practical skills, creative thinking and independent decision-making competencies. In the modern educational environment, digital platforms, virtual classrooms, electronic learning systems, mobile applications and artificial intelligence-based programs have become widely used tools in teacher training. These technologies allow for a flexible, interactive and student-centered organization of the educational process. In the conditions of digital transformation, blended learning and flipped classroom models have gained particular relevance. The blended learning model combines

online learning with traditional classroom lessons and expands students' individual learning opportunities. In the flipped classroom model, students master theoretical materials in advance through digital resources, while classroom time is mainly allocated to practical activities, discussions and problem solving. This develops students' reflective thinking, self-assessment and independent research skills, and at the same time strengthens the role of teachers as facilitators and guides.

Modern digital technologies allow teachers to personalize teaching materials, prepare assignments that are appropriate for students' learning levels, and continuously monitor their academic progress. Learning Management System (LMS) platforms, such as Moodle, Google Classroom, and Microsoft Teams, enhance teacher-student interaction and facilitate flexible assessment and feedback mechanisms. In addition, digital tools also develop students' collaborative activities and teamwork skills.

The use of authentic materials is of great importance in the professional training of future English teachers. External media resources, international news portals, podcasts, TED Talks videos, digital articles, and social media content provide students with a real language environment. These materials develop students' listening, critical analysis, and intercultural communication skills. Working with authentic resources also enables future teachers to master modern language trends and various communicative styles.

The application of artificial intelligence technologies in the field of education has formed a new stage in teacher training. AI-based platforms offer wide opportunities in terms of building personalized learning trajectories, automatic assessment, creating adaptive learning environments, and organizing language practice. Chatbots, virtual assistants, and language analysis programs are used as effective tools in developing students' speech skills. Artificial intelligence-based systems help teachers save time resources and organize the teaching process more efficiently. However, along with the rapid development of technologies, the issue of their ethical use is also becoming relevant. Teachers must adhere to the principles of academic integrity, take into account the risks of plagiarism, and form a culture of digital ethical behavior in students. In addition, it is considered important to apply artificial intelligence technologies in a balanced and consistent manner in accordance with pedagogical goals. Because technology should not replace the pedagogical role of the teacher, but rather serve as a tool supporting his professional activities. As a result, the application of innovative educational technologies in competency-based teacher training makes a significant contribution to the formation of professional, methodological, and digital competencies of future English teachers. This approach ensures that teachers adapt to the changing educational environment and enables them to respond more effectively to modern pedagogical challenges.

Conclusion. The competency-based education model is one of the most effective pedagogical approaches in the preparation of future English language teachers. This model allows developing students' methodological, communicative, digital and intercultural skills. Teacher training should be based on practical activities, innovative technologies and a reflective approach. The competency-based model accelerates students' adaptation to professional activity, forms their creative and critical thinking skills.

Thus, the application of the competency-based approach in the preparation of future English language teachers can be assessed as one of the main development directions of modern higher pedagogical education.

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