

## MODERN APPROACHES TO FORMING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

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### Abstract

In the context of rapid globalization, digital transformation, and the modernization of education systems, the issue of developing professional competence among primary school teachers has become increasingly significant. This article explores contemporary approaches to shaping teachers' professional competence, focusing on innovative pedagogical strategies, digital literacy, student-centered methodologies, and continuous professional development. The study highlights the importance of integrating theory with practice, fostering reflective teaching, and adapting to modern educational demands. The findings suggest that a comprehensive and dynamic approach is essential for preparing competent, flexible, and creative primary education professionals.

**Keywords:** professional competence, primary education, innovative pedagogy, digital literacy, lifelong learning, teacher development

### INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, rapid technological advancement, and the transformation of knowledge-based societies, education systems across the world are undergoing profound changes. These changes place new and complex demands on teachers, especially those working in primary education, where the foundations of lifelong learning are established. Primary school teachers are not only responsible for delivering basic knowledge and skills but also for shaping students' personalities, values, creativity, and critical thinking abilities. Therefore, the issue of forming and continuously developing their professional competence has become one of the central priorities of modern educational policy and practice.

Professional competence of a primary school teacher is a multidimensional construct that integrates subject knowledge, pedagogical and methodological skills, psychological readiness, communication abilities, and ethical values. In today's dynamic educational environment, competence goes beyond traditional teaching proficiency; it encompasses the ability to adapt to changing curricula, implement innovative teaching strategies, and effectively use digital technologies. Moreover,

teachers are expected to foster inclusive and learner-centered environments that respect individual differences and promote active student engagement.

The modernization of education, particularly in developing and transitioning countries, has intensified the need for highly qualified and competent teachers who can meet international standards. Contemporary reforms emphasize not only the acquisition of knowledge but also the development of key competencies such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving. In this context, primary school teachers must themselves embody these competencies in order to successfully cultivate them in their students.

Furthermore, the growing influence of digitalization and the expansion of online and blended learning environments have significantly redefined the role of teachers. No longer limited to the classroom, teachers now act as facilitators, mentors, and designers of interactive learning experiences. This shift requires a high level of digital competence, flexibility, and readiness for continuous professional growth. At the same time, the increasing diversity of learners—stemming from differences in abilities, backgrounds, and learning styles—demands that teachers adopt inclusive and differentiated teaching approaches.

Another crucial aspect of professional competence formation is the integration of theory and practice. Modern teacher education highlights the importance of experiential learning, reflective practice, and evidence-based teaching. Teachers are encouraged to critically analyze their own instructional strategies, assess their effectiveness, and continuously improve their performance. Such reflective and research-oriented practices contribute to the development of a more autonomous, responsible, and innovative teaching professional.

In light of these considerations, the formation of professional competence among primary school teachers cannot be viewed as a one-time process but rather as a continuous, dynamic, and lifelong journey. It requires the application of modern pedagogical approaches, institutional support, and active engagement of teachers in professional development activities. This article aims to explore the most effective contemporary approaches to developing professional competence in primary education and to highlight their significance in improving the overall quality of teaching and learning.

### **Main Part**

The formation of professional competence among primary school teachers in modern educational systems is grounded in a set of innovative and interconnected approaches that reflect current pedagogical, technological, and social transformations. These

approaches not only enhance teachers' instructional effectiveness but also prepare them to meet the diverse and evolving needs of learners in the 21st century.

One of the most fundamental approaches is the **competency-based approach**, which shifts the focus from the mere transmission of knowledge to the development of practical skills and the ability to apply knowledge in real-life situations. Within this framework, teachers are expected to design learning activities that promote higher-order thinking skills, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. This requires educators themselves to possess deep methodological competence, enabling them to create meaningful, problem-based, and context-oriented learning experiences. As a result, the teacher becomes not just an instructor, but a designer of learning environments that foster intellectual and personal growth.

Closely related to this is the **student-centered approach**, which emphasizes the active role of learners in the educational process. In contrast to traditional teacher-centered models, this approach requires teachers to consider students' individual needs, interests, abilities, and learning styles. The teacher acts as a facilitator, guide, and motivator, encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning. This approach significantly contributes to the development of teachers' communicative competence, emotional intelligence, and pedagogical flexibility. It also promotes a more inclusive and supportive classroom environment, where each learner feels valued and engaged.

Another essential dimension is the **integration of digital technologies and ICT competence**. In the digital era, the ability to effectively use information and communication technologies has become a key component of professional competence. Teachers are expected to utilize digital tools such as interactive platforms, virtual classrooms, multimedia resources, and assessment technologies to enhance the quality of instruction. Digital competence not only improves lesson delivery but also enables teachers to organize дистанционное (distance) and blended learning, track student progress through data-driven methods, and provide personalized feedback. Moreover, it supports the development of students' digital literacy, which is crucial in modern society.

The **reflective practice approach** plays a critical role in continuous professional development. Reflection allows teachers to critically evaluate their teaching methods, identify strengths and weaknesses, and implement necessary improvements. Through self-assessment, peer observation, and feedback mechanisms, teachers develop a deeper understanding of their professional activities. Reflective practice fosters a

culture of lifelong learning and self-improvement, which is essential for maintaining professional relevance in a rapidly changing educational landscape.

In addition, the **collaborative and community-based approach** significantly enhances teachers' professional competence. Participation in professional learning communities, workshops, seminars, and conferences provides opportunities for knowledge exchange, experience sharing, and collective problem-solving.

Collaboration with colleagues encourages innovation, supports emotional well-being, and reduces professional isolation. It also allows teachers to stay informed about new pedagogical trends, research findings, and best practices.

The **practice-oriented and integrative approach** is another important aspect, focusing on the connection between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Teacher training programs increasingly emphasize internships, classroom observations, and real teaching experiences. Such practice-oriented activities help teachers develop practical skills, classroom management strategies, and the ability to respond effectively to real educational challenges. Integration of interdisciplinary knowledge also strengthens teachers' ability to design holistic and meaningful learning experiences.

Furthermore, the **lifelong learning approach** underlines that professional competence is not static but continuously evolving. Teachers must engage in ongoing professional development through formal education, online courses, certifications, and independent learning. This approach ensures that teachers remain adaptable, innovative, and responsive to new educational demands. Lifelong learning also contributes to personal growth, motivation, and professional satisfaction.

Finally, increasing attention is being paid to the **innovative and creative approach**, which encourages teachers to experiment with new teaching methods, such as project-based learning, gamification, and inquiry-based instruction. Creativity in teaching enhances student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement. It also allows teachers to develop unique pedagogical styles and adapt to diverse classroom contexts.

In summary, modern approaches to forming the professional competence of primary school teachers are multifaceted and dynamic. They require the integration of pedagogical innovation, technological proficiency, reflective thinking, collaboration, and continuous self-development. The effective implementation of these approaches not only improves teaching quality but also contributes to the overall advancement of the education system.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the formation of professional competence among primary school teachers requires the implementation of modern, integrated approaches that combine pedagogical innovation, digital literacy, and continuous self-improvement. The effectiveness of primary education largely depends on teachers' ability to adapt to new challenges, apply student-centered methods, and engage in lifelong learning. Therefore, educational institutions and policymakers must support teachers through training programs, resources, and opportunities for professional growth. Only through such comprehensive efforts can highly competent and motivated primary school teachers be developed.

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