

METHODOLOGICAL CULTURE AND PROFESSIONALISM OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER

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Abstract. *This article examines the concept of methodological culture and its role in the development of professionalism among foreign language teachers. It highlights the importance of communicative teaching approaches, creativity, and pedagogical competence in achieving effective learning outcomes. The study analyzes different levels of teacher professionalism, including literacy, craftsmanship, and mastery, as defined in pedagogical theory. Special attention is given to key teaching skills such as planning, adaptation, communication, and motivation. The findings suggest that methodological culture is a crucial factor in enhancing teaching effectiveness and fostering students' communicative competence. Furthermore, the article emphasizes the need for integrating innovative strategies and research-based practices into language teaching to meet modern educational demands.*

Keywords. *methodological culture, foreign language teaching, teacher professionalism, communicative approach, pedagogical skills, motivation, creativity, self-development*

A truly effective teacher isn't just knowledgeable, but also possesses the ability and tools to teach; these essential teaching methods are known as "methodological culture." In this regard, methodological culture serves as a fundamental tool in the teaching profession. Without pedagogical skills, even a highly knowledgeable specialist cannot be considered a true teacher. In a communicative learning approach, the desired learning outcome is set first, and then the tasks to achieve it are designed. This method prioritizes fresh content and varied exercises, avoiding repetition to boost student engagement and speaking proficiency. Such diversity promotes the development of communicative competence, learner engagement, and productive speech skills. In modern education, methodological culture is closely linked to communicative competence. However, limitations such as insufficient instructional time may hinder the effective management of the teaching process.

According to E.I. Passov, teacher professionalism develops through several stages: the level of literacy (basic methodological knowledge), the level of craftsmanship (application of known techniques), and the level of mastery, which requires creativity. The initial group of adaptive skills pertains to the educator's ability to select and implement diverse teaching

techniques that are congruent with the prevailing real-world classroom environment. The second group of adaptive skills relates to the educator's proficiency in modifying and adjusting speech-related instructional materials. M.L. Weisburd highlights that teaching effectiveness depends on the teacher's individual characteristics, including personality, abilities, and teaching style, as well as students' learning preferences. For instance, teachers with strong communicative abilities may focus on speaking and interactive activities, while those inclined toward literature may prioritize reading skills. Nevertheless, successful teaching always requires a balance of practice, analysis, and a solid grammatical foundation

Methodological competence also involves various teaching skills, particularly:

- ✓ Design skills: For planning and conceptualizing lessons.
- ✓ Adaptation skills: For tailoring teaching tools and materials to specific classroom conditions and student needs.
- ✓ Organizational skills: For structuring classroom activities effectively.
- ✓ Communicative skills: Crucial for language teachers, allowing them to engage students as active speech partners and create a supportive learning atmosphere.
- ✓ Motivational skills: Essential for making the subject relevant, energizing students, and sustaining their interest. Studies show that interest in foreign language learning often wanes in later grades, making individualized learning a key to ongoing motivation.
- ✓ Innovative and Research skills: Creativity, enthusiasm, and a research-oriented approach are considered the pinnacle of teaching professionalism, fostering joy in learning and working.

Design skills, within the overarching framework of methodological culture, represent a foundational and indispensable competence for educators. They are the cognitive and practical abilities that underpin the entire pedagogical process, serving as the initial point of ideation and strategic planning for any instructional endeavor. As the original text succinctly states, "any work begins with an idea, thinking through and drawing up the work plan," and it is precisely this initial phase that design skills govern. Within a communicative learning paradigm, the instructional process is initiated by defining the ultimate "goal" or "end product," subsequently delineating the sequential tasks designed to facilitate the attainment of this predetermined outcome.

Adaptation skills are equally important, enabling teachers to adjust teaching methods and materials to specific learning conditions. Passov distinguishes between adapting teaching techniques and adapting speech material. Additionally, teachers must possess organizational, communicative, innovative, and research skills.

Organizational skills ensure effective classroom management, while communicative skills allow teachers to act as partners in the learning process, fostering interaction rather than

one-sided instruction. A positive teacher-student relationship is essential for creating a supportive learning environment. Organizational skills pertain to the teacher's ability to orchestrate classroom activities, recognizing that learning constitutes a deliberately structured process. L.I. Umansky, for instance, developed a specialized questionnaire designed to facilitate self-assessment of an individual's strengths and weaknesses as an organizer.

To function as an adept language partner, thus possessing **communicative skills**, is paramount for those engaged in "speaking professions." It is particularly vital that the learner is not merely "subjected to training," but rather is intrinsically motivated and consciously engaged in the learning process, with the teacher acting as a genuine speech partner and facilitator. This aligns with B.F. Lomov's definition of communication not as the unilateral influence of one individual upon another, but as a reciprocal interaction between partners. Given that communicative skills in many contexts tend to be predominantly declarative, the classroom atmosphere is largely contingent upon cultivating interest, not only in the subject matter but also in the teacher's persona as a communicative interlocutor. Genuine personal rapport is precluded if the teacher dismisses students, expresses indignation at their lack of knowledge, exhibits irritation without cause, or fails to acknowledge humor and positive interactions.. Mastering a communicative methodological culture is now considered essential for foreign language teachers. Professional development in teaching progresses through distinct levels: from basic knowledge ("literacy"), to applying established techniques ("craft"), and finally to a high level of "skill" that incorporates creativity. Teachers should also adapt their methods to their own personality and their students' aptitudes, as highlighted by M.L. Weisburd. For example, a teacher with strong interpersonal skills might emphasize oral communication and role-playing, while one passionate about literature might focus on reading. However, foundational elements like grammar, synthesis, and analysis remain critical regardless of the primary focus.

Motivational skills are also crucial. Teachers should demonstrate the relevance of foreign language learning and inspire students to engage actively. Research shows that while students initially display high motivation, interest often declines over time. Therefore, individualization of instruction is key to maintaining motivation. The **motivational skills** of a teacher are exemplified by their commitment to demonstrating the intrinsic and extrinsic value of their subject in real-life contexts, underscoring the significance of foreign language proficiency for each individual student. Through effective motivation, the teacher imbues students with the necessary energy for their learning endeavors, fostering desire, stimulating interest, galvanizing willpower, and facilitating the recognition of genuine need. Research indicates a notable decline in student interest in foreign language acquisition; studies have shown that while over 97% of students commence foreign language study in the 5th grade

with enthusiasm, this interest diminishes for 86% of students by the 8th grade. E.I. Passov identifies the individualization of the learning process as the cornerstone of motivation, commencing with an assessment of each student's aptitude for language acquisition. According to studies, it is exceedingly rare to find an individual entirely devoid of any inclination towards mastering a foreign language.

Finally, **creativity and research-oriented** thinking represent the highest level of methodological culture. As noted by scholars, originality of thought and enthusiasm are essential qualities of an effective teacher. Teaching, when approached as a form of research activity, leads to professional growth and enhances overall teaching quality. The capacity for originality of thought is widely regarded as a rare and invaluable attribute, possessing the potential to compensate for deficiencies in numerous other areas. Enthusiasm can be considered a leading quality, as the absence of a research-oriented motivation renders other qualities largely ineffectual. Creative talent is a composite of various nuanced elements, including "lateral thinking." The French psychologist, Surya, sagaciously observed that "in order to create – it is necessary to think about." V.A. Sukhomlinsky espoused the belief that children should be educated to experience happiness, and correspondingly, teachers should derive pleasure from their professional work. The fundamental prerequisite for joyful labor is engagement in research-oriented work. Consequently, the research labor undertaken by an educator represents the apex of professionalism and teaching culture.

Methodological culture is a fundamental component of foreign language teacher professionalism. It integrates pedagogical knowledge, practical skills, and creative abilities, enabling teachers to effectively manage the learning process. The communicative approach, combined with innovative and individualized strategies, enhances student engagement and learning outcomes. Ultimately, the development of methodological culture requires continuous self-improvement, reflection, and research-oriented practice. By fostering these qualities, teachers can achieve higher levels of professionalism and contribute to the advancement of modern education.

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