

Improving the Psychological and Pedagogical Competences of the Teaching Staff of Comrat State University in the Lifelong Learning System

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Abstract. *In modern society, it is important to improve the quality of the educational process at each stage. There is a need to introduce innovations based on the implementation of the competences approach principles. Comrat State University has a lifelong learning center. Due to the work of European Projects, the implementation of innovations in the system of professional development of specialists has become more effective.*

Keywords: *lifelong learning, qualification improvement, innovative pedagogy.*

The issue of improving the professional competence of higher education teachers in recent decades has acquired particular importance and revealed relevant aspects. The pedagogical reality that has developed in higher education indicates that the problem of improving the professional competencies of university teachers in accordance with the tasks that manifest themselves in pedagogical reality is becoming increasingly important. The requirements for the psychological and pedagogical competence of a teacher are constantly becoming more complicated, which is due to a number of reasons.

Firstly, the social demand for the training of highly qualified personnel capable of developing an innovative economy and ensuring the competitiveness of the state requires a comprehensive improvement of the educational process at the university, a significant increase in its quality.

Secondly, the integration of education systems, envisaged by the signing of the Bologna Declaration, involves the introduction of innovative approaches to teaching students and, accordingly, imposes increased requirements on the competence of university teachers. The modern educational paradigm shifts the emphasis from traditional teaching to managing students' independent cognitive activity, which requires the teacher to master new pedagogical approaches, as well as methods and forms of work.

Thirdly, the increasing development of information technologies and their introduction into education expand the ability of teachers to transfer educational knowledge and create a need for a better mastery of modern information technologies, including distance and blended learning technologies. All this changes the position and role of the teacher in the didactic process of the university, as well as the nature of communicative interaction with students [1].

And, finally, the competence-based approach to the training of modern specialists, provided for by the reform of higher education, prioritizes not only the issue of the formation of students' social and professional competencies, but also the development of the corresponding psychological and pedagogical competencies of the teacher himself.

The need for psychological and pedagogical training of teachers in the system of higher education is also motivated by the fact that some of them do not have a basic professional pedagogical education. Psychological and pedagogical knowledge is mastered empirically, as one enters the profession, and is largely random, unsystematized, and therefore is not a reliable theoretical basis for the successful solution of professional issues.

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Thus, in recent years, there has been a growing trend towards the mandatory psychological and pedagogical training of university teachers in the system of additional professional education.

The problem of developing the competence of a university teacher has acquired particular importance along with the spread of the concept of competence-oriented education, which formed the basis of documents related to the reform of higher education.

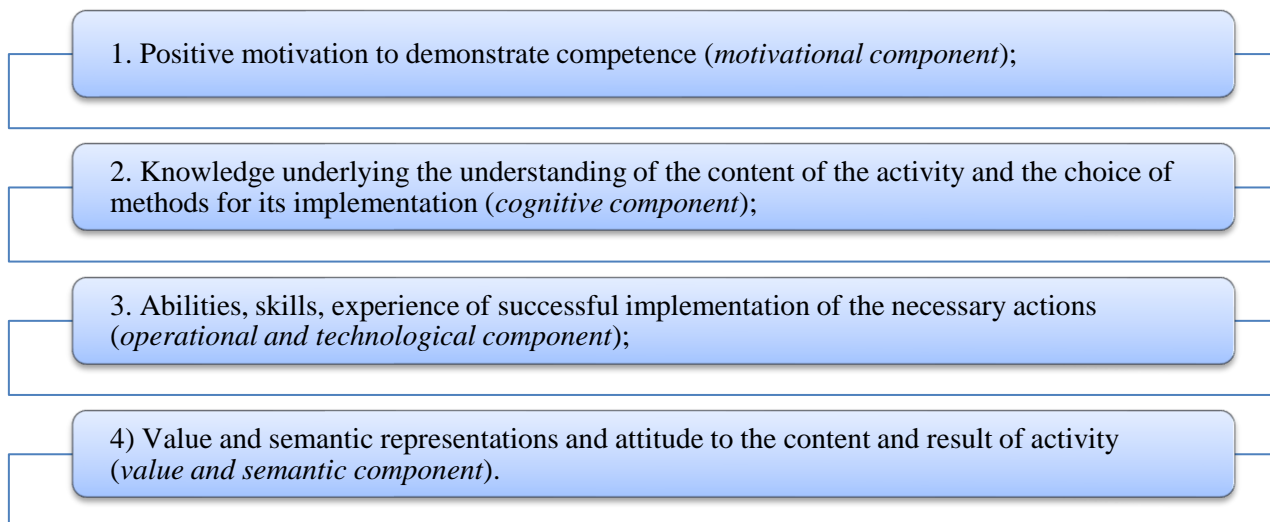
The main goal of the competence-based approach is to strengthen the practical orientation of education, going beyond the limited “knowledge” paradigm. Competence-oriented education, therefore, involves the mastery of the main methods of activity by students, the development of their readiness to flexibly use the existing knowledge, skills, and abilities to solve life and professional issues.

The need to form students’ social and professional competencies that can ensure further successful adaptation and competitiveness in a market economy forces us to regard the issue of the university teachers’ competence from the perspective of the extent they themselves have the appropriate set of competencies in order to fully fulfill the task of training modern specialists, which is entrusted to them.

Taking into account that the activity of a high school teacher is multifunctional and includes not only pedagogical, but also research, methodological, technical and didactic and other activities, it is advisable to separate professional and pedagogical competence. At the same time, pedagogical competence is an integral part of the teacher’s professional competence. And since training and education involve direct communication with students, the use of methods of psychological influence on them, methods of self-regulation of mental states, etc., it is advisable to use a broader concept of “psychological and pedagogical competence” of a higher education teacher.

Thus, the competence of a higher education teacher is understood as a set of professional knowledge, skills, values, as well as a willingness to use them for the effective implementation of professional activities.

In the teacher’s competence structure, the following components can be distinguished [4]:



The criteria for assessing the formation of the competence of a university teacher are, therefore, the totality of his professional knowledge, abilities, skills, values that guide him in his activities, and the motivational readiness to perform professional functions in a qualified manner, with a high level of quality.

Such factors as the social demand for the training of specialists needed on the labor market, changes in economic and socio-cultural living conditions, scientific and technological

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achievements, determine new requirements for the professional activity of a teacher. So, for example, the internationalization of education or the introduction of information technologies in education radically changes the pedagogical process in a university and at the same time contributes to the acquisition of new knowledge by the teacher and the formation of new ways of working for him. The teacher's functions expansion over time is fixed in the qualification characteristic, reflecting the scientifically based composition of professional knowledge, skills and abilities. A qualification characteristic is nothing more than a normative model of professional competence.

New forms and methods of teaching based on computer technology are widely used in universities. We have to admit that the introduction of information technologies in the educational process of higher education puts forward a number of new requirements for the professional competence of a teacher.

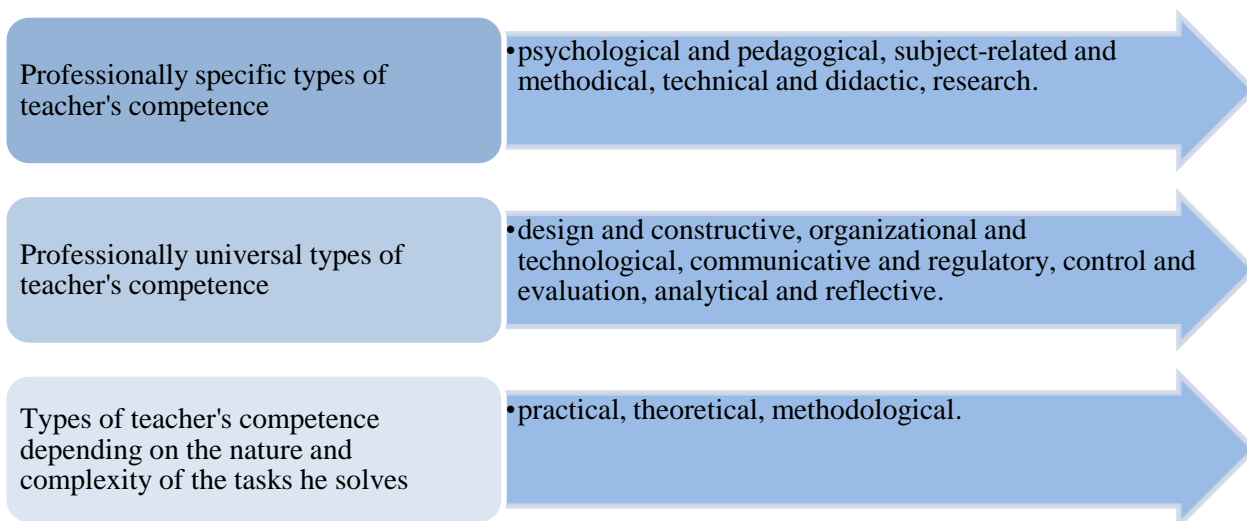
First, the importance of technical and didactic training, knowledge of the pedagogical possibilities of information technology is increasing. In this regard, there is a need for readiness for continuous improvement in this area.

Secondly, the teacher is required to be able to prepare training courses in their electronic representation.

Thirdly, the wide opportunities provided by modern technical means require the teacher to be confident in new forms and methods of teaching, first of all, the method of conducting a lecture in the form of a presentation, a simulation laboratory workshop, a webinar, a chat session, teleconferences, etc.

The teacher already now has to take into account the new realities of the functioning of universities: the growth of the economic component in their activities, increased competition, the total introduction of teaching aids based on information technology, and integration processes in the field of education.

Taking into account that the professional competence of a teacher is formed in the process of activity, it is quite reasonable to single out the types of competencies in accordance with the types of activity:



Psychological and pedagogical competence of a teacher is manifested as his ability and willingness to pedagogically competently interact with students, manage their cognitive activity, communication and at the same time regulate their own behavior and activities. Psychological and pedagogical competence is based on the relevant knowledge, skills, spiritual and moral values and

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implies the readiness of their creative implementation in professional activities to achieve its high results. The development of the psychological and pedagogical competence of a teacher is influenced by many factors: the nature of basic professional training, natural abilities and inclinations, work motivation, pedagogical orientation of the individual.

The psychological and pedagogical competence of a teacher is formed in the process of professional activity, which directly depends on the educational situation in the country and the world, so a series of social factors cannot be ignored. Such factors as the social demand for the training of specialists capable of developing an innovative economy and ensuring the competitiveness of the state, the convergence of national higher education systems within the framework of integration processes, the widespread introduction of information technologies in education, impose new requirements on the psychological and pedagogical competence of a teacher. He already has to develop curricula taking into account different levels of students' training, use information technology in the learning process, focus on the formation of social and professional competencies of graduates in order to increase their competitiveness in the labor market.

To implement the pedagogical idea of the need to build a system for improving the pedagogical qualifications of teachers, a program for improving the psychological and pedagogical competence of teachers of higher education has been created and operates at Comrat State University.

In this regard, we note that since the 2010-2011 academic year, the University has opened the Center for Lifelong Learning of Didactic Personnel, which is a university structural unit that implements a wide range of additional educational programs for professional retraining for specialists in the field of pre-university and higher education.

One of the areas of the Center's work is the organization and conduct of courses on the psychological and pedagogical module since 2014. The courses are intended for teachers of higher education, didactic personnel of the system of professional and additional education, who do not have special psychological and pedagogical training.

The purpose of professional development is the growth of professionalism, which can be achieved in the process of solving the following tasks:

- motivation for self-development, self-education, professional growth, career;
- increasing competence: social, psychological, pedagogical, economic, legal, special, etc.;
- development of psychological properties, professionally important qualities, correction of professional forms of behavior;
- development of self-competence (personal competence) and adjustment of the teacher's professional and psychological profile;
- providing conditions for self-development, self-education of the individual [2].

The development of the psychological and pedagogical module is designed to help the teacher to realize the need to get rid of outdated stereotypes, change their own professional position on the basis of its reflective analysis and mastering modern scientific ideas. This approach contributes to giving the system of higher education sustainability and expediency, developing teachers' independence and responsibility, self-awareness, initiative and creative attitude to pedagogical activity [3].

An additional reserve is the use of some distance education technologies and interactive IT tools. This became possible as a result of the participation of teachers from the Comrat State University in the European educational projects TEACH ME and COMPASS, the reorganization of the existing Center for Lifelong Learning within these projects during 2017-2022. The Center

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is provided with modern computer equipment that meets the needs of the university. During the implementation of these projects, innovative and educational proposals were prepared for teachers involved in lifelong learning courses and the attractiveness and access to lifelong learning was increased by revising and adapting the e-learning methodology.

So, the investment attractiveness of a university often depends on the innovative nature of the development of scientific, educational and practical activities of the educational process subjects and their involvement in the innovation system. Taking into account these factors, the educational process at Comrat State University is built on the basis of modern educational technologies and organizational forms of education in order to shift the main focus of the learning process to the student, develop and encourage his initiative, creativity, independence, responsibility for the results of his work.

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