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TRADITIONAL AND INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN THE PRACTICE OF THE MODERN TEACHER

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Abstract. This article analyses the relationship and the harmonious combination of traditional and innovative approaches in the practice of the modern teacher. It reveals the essence of the traditional model of education and its historical place in the education system, the content and possibilities of innovative approaches, and the importance of the competence-based approach. The article also examines the role of digital technologies in the teacher's professional development and in raising the quality of education, and argues that the two approaches should not be set against each other but combined into a single, complementary system.

Keywords: teacher, traditional education, innovative approach, competence, digital pedagogy, interactive methods, blended learning, professional development.

Introduction

Under today's conditions of globalisation and the knowledge economy, the demands placed on the education system have changed fundamentally. Whereas several decades ago the main task of education was understood as transmitting a fixed body of ready-made knowledge from one generation to the next, today it must cultivate in learners such qualities as independent thinking, creativity, the ability to solve problems on their own, and a readiness for lifelong learning. The rapid renewal of knowledge and the swift development of technology are transforming education from a mere process of conveying information into a process of equipping the individual with competences [1].

The educational reforms being carried out in Uzbekistan likewise move in this very direction: they aim to modernise the content of education, to place the learner's personality at the centre, and to raise the quality of teacher training. In this process the decisive factor is the teacher, because any reform, programme or new technology is ultimately realised precisely through the teacher and through their everyday practical work. For this reason, the question of how skilfully the modern teacher is able to combine time-tested traditional methods with new, innovative approaches acquires particular relevance.

This article offers a comparative analysis of the essence of traditional and innovative approaches, argues that they do not negate but rather complement one another, and considers the professional competences required of the modern teacher as well as the role of digital technologies. The central idea of the study is that the effectiveness of education is revealed not in choosing one of the two approaches, but in combining them wisely.

It should be specially noted that the concepts of the "traditional" and the "innovative" are often misinterpreted: one encounters the oversimplified views that the traditional is "outdated and unnecessary", while any innovation is "automatically good". In reality, both approaches have their strengths and weaknesses, and innovation is not a value in itself — it acquires genuine worth only when it solves a concrete pedagogical problem and improves the educational outcome. The present article proceeds from precisely this balanced standpoint.

The essence and place of the traditional approach

The traditional model of education is, by convention, built around the teacher. In this model the core of the knowledge-transfer process consists of the lecture, explanation and demonstration: the teacher, as the principal source of knowledge, expounds the material systematically, while the learner participates mainly as a subject who receives it, memorises it and reproduces it when required. The assessment of knowledge, too, is as a rule based on memorising the material and reproducing it accurately. The historical formation of the traditional approach and its place in the education system have been treated extensively in the Uzbek pedagogical literature [2].

It would be wrong to evaluate the traditional approach only from a critical standpoint. It possesses a number of important merits that have not lost their significance even today. First, it gives the learner a firm, systematic and coherent theoretical foundation — any creative or practical activity rests precisely on such basic knowledge. Second, traditional methods make it possible to deliver a large volume of material coherently to a large audience in a short time. Third, they foster such qualities as discipline, responsibility and the habit of academic work.

At the same time, this model also has its limitations. The fact that the learner participates mainly as a passive listener does not always allow their activeness, initiative and creative potential to be fully expressed. And assessment based on memorisation does not always reflect the depth of understanding or the ability to apply the acquired knowledge in new situations. It was precisely these limitations that gave rise to the need for innovative approaches in modern education. This does not, however, mean that traditional methods should be abandoned entirely — they remain a necessary, though not sufficient, part of the educational process.

Pedagogical practice shows that traditional methods still remain the most effective solution in certain situations. For example, nothing can replace coherent explanation in the initial mastering of a subject's basic concepts, definitions and fundamental laws; and the lecture is a convenient form for giving a general introduction to a new topic in a large audience. The question, therefore, is not one of rejecting traditional methods altogether, but of applying them in the right place and at the right time, in accordance with the learning objective. It is precisely at this point that the need to combine traditional and innovative approaches arises naturally.

The content and possibilities of innovative approaches

Innovative approaches shift the centre of gravity of the educational process from the teacher to the learner. Here the learner is regarded not as a passive recipient of knowledge but as a subject who actively seeks, discovers and constructs it. This view goes back to the constructivist ideas that are widespread in modern pedagogy: the principle of "learning by doing" advanced by J. Dewey requires engaging the learner in real, meaningful activity [7], while P. Freire's ideas of dialogic and critical pedagogy envisage turning education into an equal dialogue between teacher and learner [8].

In practice, the innovative approach manifests itself through its rich arsenal of methods. Interactive methods such as clustering, brainstorming, the project method, problem-based learning, case study, debate and group work encourage the learner to think, to inquire and to cooperate. The STEAM approach, by uniting science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics around single, life-related projects, ensures the integrity and applicability of knowledge [4]. Such methods develop in the learner not only knowledge, but also the skills of analysing, evaluating, substantiating an opinion and cooperating effectively with others.

In this approach the role of the teacher also changes: rather than being the sole source of knowledge, the teacher becomes more of an organiser, guide and supporter — a facilitator. Their task is not to provide ready answers, but to create environments and situations that prompt the learner to inquire independently. Research shows that the consistent application of innovative

technologies significantly develops learners' independent thinking, creativity and learning motivation [5].

Another important aspect of the innovative approach is the change in attitude towards assessment. Whereas in the traditional model assessment is directed mainly at recording the knowledge acquired at the end of the learning process (summative assessment), in innovative education formative assessment takes the leading place. Here assessment is regarded not as a means of "sorting" learners, but as a tool that supports their development by pointing out their strengths and weaknesses in good time and guiding them. Collaborative learning, in turn, encourages learners to learn from one another, to exchange ideas and to construct knowledge together, thereby also developing their social and communicative skills.

The harmonious combination of traditional and innovative approaches

One of the most important conclusions of modern pedagogy is that setting traditional and innovative approaches against one another is a mistaken and ineffective path. They are not mutually exclusive alternatives, but two sides of a single, complementary system. While the traditional approach provides a firm theoretical foundation and systematic knowledge, the innovative approach brings that knowledge to life through activity, practice and creativity, turning it into the learner's personal experience.

Such a combination manifests itself in various forms in practice. For example, the teacher's traditional explanation of theoretical material may be reinforced with interactive exercises and group discussion; theoretical knowledge is supplemented with practical project work; and the teacher simultaneously fulfils the roles of both guide and facilitator. The flipped classroom and blended learning models that are widely used today are vivid examples of precisely this kind of combination: the learner masters the theoretical material independently and remotely, while classroom time is devoted to discussion, practice and creative activity.

The decisive factor here is the teacher's methodological flexibility. A skilful teacher does not cling blindly to any single method, but each time chooses the most effective method, or set of methods, on the basis of the learning objective, the content of the topic and the characteristics of the learners. It is precisely this kind of sensible integration that raises the effectiveness of education and ensures the learner's active participation in the process [6].

This can be illustrated with a simple example. Suppose the teacher begins the study of a new topic with a short, traditional explanation and gives the learners the necessary theoretical foundation. The teacher then divides them into small groups and presents a problem situation or a project task related to the topic — at this stage the learners apply the knowledge they have gained, discuss it and seek a solution collaboratively. Finally, through a digital platform, each learner presents their result and receives formative feedback. Within a single lesson, traditional explanation, interactive group work and digital assessment are combined, drawing on the strengths of each approach. Such an integrated design makes learning both meaningful and active.

The professional competences of the modern teacher

A teacher who can successfully combine traditional and innovative approaches is required to possess a number of modern professional competences. The first of these is digital competence — that is, the ability to use digital tools, educational platforms and resources consciously and in accordance with pedagogical aims. The second is communicative culture, since innovative education is based above all on communication, dialogue and cooperation; the teacher must be able to listen to learners, support them and create a healthy learning environment.

A third important quality is innovative and creative thinking: the teacher's ability to take a critical view of their own work, to seek new solutions and to remain open to change. The fourth is

the methodological flexibility noted above. To these one should add reflection — the teacher's ability to analyse their own activity regularly and to draw conclusions from it. Pedagogical competences are, in essence, one of the principal factors determining the quality of education [3].

Alongside the competences listed above, the teacher's social and emotional maturity is also becoming increasingly important. Establishing relationships of trust with learners, sensing their individual needs, and being able to create a supportive and safe learning environment — all of these have a direct effect on the educational outcome. In addition, assessment competence — the skill of assessing learners' knowledge objectively, fairly and developmentally — is also becoming an essential skill for the modern teacher. It is evident that the professional profile of the modern teacher is determined not by subject knowledge alone, but by a broad set of pedagogical, psychological and technological competences.

Most importantly, the modern teacher is a lifelong learner. Under conditions of the rapid renewal of knowledge and technology, it is impossible to confine oneself to information acquired once and for all. For this reason, the teacher's continuous professional development, in-service training and self-improvement become not merely a personal initiative but a professional necessity. It is only such a teacher who can cultivate the skill of lifelong learning in learners as well.

The role of digital technologies

Over recent decades, digital technologies have significantly transformed the educational process and created broad opportunities for the realisation of innovative approaches [6]. Online platforms and management systems such as Moodle and Google Classroom enrich both the organisational and the substantive side of education. They strengthen communication between teacher and learner, speed up the provision of feedback, expand the learner's opportunity to study independently at their own pace, and make the assessment system more transparent and consistent [9].

At the same time, an important principle must be observed in introducing digital technologies into education: technology is not an end, but a means. An online platform or interactive application does not by itself automatically raise the quality of education; its effectiveness depends entirely on the pedagogical aim, the teacher's methodological skill and the appropriate use of the technology. A superficial use of technology that does not enrich the content may even produce the opposite result. For this reason, a clear pedagogical logic must take the lead in the selection and use of digital tools.

International organisations, including UNESCO, also identify supporting teachers and improving their digital and methodological preparation as a priority direction of modern educational policy [9]. This confirms once again that at the centre of any technological renewal stands a mature, competent and continuously developing teacher.

Here it is also necessary to acknowledge certain difficulties associated with digitalisation. The uneven access to the internet and digital devices (the "digital divide"), the excessive amount of time spent in front of a screen, and the differences in the level of digital literacy of teachers and learners may all affect the quality and fairness of education. Solving these problems requires not the rejection of technology, but its thoughtful, proportionate and pedagogically grounded introduction. Likewise, new possibilities such as artificial intelligence and adaptive learning systems also demand a critical and responsible attitude from the teacher — technology does not replace the teacher, but becomes a tool that supports their work.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the harmonious combination of traditional and innovative approaches in the practice of the modern teacher is one of the principal factors in raising the quality of education. While traditional methods give the learner a firm theoretical foundation and systematic knowledge,

innovative approaches shape them into an active, creative, independently thinking individual capable of cooperation. Not the opposition of these two approaches, but their sensible combination as a single, complementary system, ensures the effectiveness of education.

The success of such integration depends, above all, on the teacher's professional potential. Only a teacher who is equipped with digital competence, communicative culture, innovative thinking, methodological flexibility and reflection, and who is ready to learn continuously, can skilfully combine different approaches. For this reason, the continuous development of their professional competences remains one of the most important tasks facing teachers in modern education.

There is no doubt that changes in the field of education will accelerate further in the future, and that artificial intelligence and new digital possibilities will continue to transform pedagogical practice. Yet however rapid these changes may be, the central place of the teacher will be preserved: it is precisely the teacher who binds the various approaches, methods and tools into a single purposeful system in the interests of the learner. In this sense, the task of the modern teacher is not to make an artificial choice between tradition and novelty, but to combine the best aspects of both and to create an educational environment that serves the all-round development of every learner. It is this very mastery that constitutes the true measure of the modern teacher's excellence.

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