

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE GEOGRAPHY TEACHERS THROUGH MODERN APPROACHES AND TECHNOLOGY

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Abstract:

The field of geography education has witnessed significant advancements, and educators are increasingly adopting innovative methods to enhance teaching effectiveness and student engagement. This article explores the application of four pedagogical approaches – acmeological, competency-based, heuristic, and learner-centered – in geography education to foster professional competence among future teachers. The acmeological approach emphasizes personal growth and achievement, encouraging students to excel in geographical concepts through goal-oriented learning and mentorship. The competency-based approach focuses on developing practical geographical skills via experiential learning and competency-based assessments. The heuristic approach promotes inquiry-based learning and problem-solving, utilizing fieldwork and critical questioning techniques to deepen students' understanding. Lastly, the learner-centered approach prioritizes individualized learning experiences, tailoring instruction to meet students' needs and interests. By integrating these approaches, educators can create a rich, student-centered learning environment that nurtures geographic proficiency and prepares students for a globalized world. The findings highlight that these methods provide valuable frameworks for developing geography teachers' professional skills, offering a roadmap for creating impactful learning experiences. The study concludes that applying these approaches contributes to producing knowledgeable, skilled, and reflective geography educators capable of fostering critical thinking and inquiry among their students.

Keywords: Geography education, modern pedagogical approach, acmeological approach, heuristic approach, competence approach, person-oriented education, professional development.

Introduction

Modern pedagogical approaches represent a mechanism that adapts education to contemporary demands, while enhancing its relevance and social significance. The research and application of contemporary educational reforms serve as the focal point of pedagogical science. As one form of social consciousness, pedagogy continuously evolves, transforms, and improves. Each



era presents its own unique challenges in educational research, which are approached with distinct methodologies and scientific approaches.

Literature Review

There is increasing attention given to the study of contemporary pedagogical approaches by both domestic and international scholars. In our country, the issue has been explored by researchers such as H. Shaikhova [11], G. Tillaeva [5], B. Khodjaev [3], L. Bobokhodjaeva, N. Indiaminov, B. Babajanov, and N. Duschanova [1]. Abroad, scholars such as A. Zaparozec [7], N. Ivanisheva [8], P. Simonov [9], E. Tamojnyaya [10], and M. Smirova [10] have contributed to the literature on this topic.

Research Methodology

1. Acmeological Approach in Geography Education

The acmeological approach, which is based on personal development and achievement, is particularly relevant in geography education. This approach encourages students to reach their highest potential in understanding the complexities of the world. Below are several strategies for applying this approach in geography education:

- **Goal-Oriented Education:** Geography teachers should set clear objectives for students, motivating them to strive for excellence in understanding geographical concepts, spatial reasoning, and problem-solving.
- **Differentiated Instruction:** Acknowledging the unique learning needs and abilities of each student is essential. Implementing differentiated teaching strategies helps cater to diverse learners, aiding them in reaching their peak understanding or mastery [6].
- **Self-Directed Learning:** Encouraging students to take ownership of their educational journey. Opportunities for independent research projects related to geographical topics allow students to explore personal interests and develop their knowledge through self-directed study.
- **Mentorship and Guidance:** Establishing mentor relationships between students and experienced geography teachers is vital. Mentors provide guidance to help students achieve the highest levels of geographical competence.

2. Competency-Based Approach in Geography Education

The competency-based approach aims to develop specific skills and abilities essential in the field of geography. This approach emphasizes the practical, real-world application of knowledge. Key recommendations for implementing the competency-based approach in geography education include:

- **Defined Learning Outcomes:** Clearly specifying the competencies and skills that students are expected to acquire in geography education, such as map reading, data analysis, and spatial reasoning.



- **Experiential Learning:** Incorporating hands-on learning opportunities, such as fieldwork and geographical research, to help students practice and develop their competencies in real-world contexts.
- **Competency-Based Assessment:** Using competency-based assessments, such as performance-based tasks and portfolio evaluations, to gauge students' mastery of specific geographical skills [7].
- **Alignment with Professional Standards:** Ensuring that geography education programs are aligned with national or international standards for geographical competencies, providing a clear foundation for skill development.

3. Heuristic Approach in Geography Education

As previously mentioned, the heuristic approach focuses on inquiry-based learning and problem-solving. It encourages students to actively explore geographical concepts and discover solutions through their investigations. Below are suggestions for applying the heuristic approach in geography education:

- **Inquiry-Based Projects:** Assigning open-ended, inquiry-based projects that require students to ask questions, gather data, analyze findings, and draw conclusions about geographical phenomena.
- **Socratic Dialogue:** Utilizing Socratic questioning techniques to guide students in critical thinking and problem-solving related to geographical issues.
- **Fieldwork and Data Collection:** Engaging students in fieldwork where they collect their own geographical data. This practical approach fosters curiosity and investigation.
- **Problem-Based Learning:** Presenting students with real-world geographical problems or scenarios, encouraging them to apply their knowledge and heuristic skills to find solutions.

4. Learner-Centered Approach in Geography Education

The learner-centered approach places students at the heart of the educational process, focusing on their individual needs, interests, and experiences. This approach acknowledges that each student is unique [11]. In geography education, the learner-centered approach can be applied in the following situations:

- **Individualized Learning Plans:** Developing personalized learning plans that allow students to select geographical topics or projects that align with their interests and aspirations.
- **Individual Support:** Providing personalized support and feedback based on students' learning styles and progress, helping them identify their strengths and areas for improvement.



- **Student-Centered Classrooms:** Creating student-centered classrooms where learners have a voice in their educational experiences, encouraging them to take ownership of their learning.
 - **Reflective Practice:** Cultivating a reflective culture where students regularly reflect on their learning experiences and set personal goals for developing geographical competence.
- A comparative analysis of these modern pedagogical approaches in geography education demonstrates their distinct advantages, which are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparative Analysis of Modern Pedagogical Approaches in Geography Education

Approach	Key Focus	Implementation in Geography Education
Acmeological Approach	Personal development and achievement	Goal-oriented learning, mentoring, self-directed projects
Competency-Based Approach	Specific skills and abilities	Defined learning outcomes, experiential learning, assessment
Heuristic Approach	Inquiry-based learning and problem-solving	Inquiry-based projects, Socratic dialogue, fieldwork
Learner-Centered Approach	Student-centered learning and individual needs	Individualized plans, personalized support, reflection

As illustrated, the acmeological, competency-based, heuristic, and learner-centered approaches each offer valuable foundations for improving geography education. By combining these approaches, geography teachers can create engaging, competency-driven, inquiry-based, and student-centered learning experiences. These approaches help students realize their highest potential in understanding the world's geography, preparing them to navigate an increasingly complex and interconnected global landscape. Ultimately, the application of these pedagogical approaches fosters the development of knowledgeable, skilled, and inquisitive global citizens.

Conclusions

The gradual integration of modern pedagogical approaches in geography education provides prospective geography teachers with comprehensive and systematic guidance for transforming their teaching practices. Teachers align their educational goals and competencies with curriculum standards and prioritize the selected pedagogical approaches accordingly. Once goals are set, teachers choose the most appropriate approach for each lesson unit, considering the diversity of students. At the core of the algorithm lies the design of engaging and practical learning activities that incorporate real-world scenarios and promote collaboration tailored to individual educational profiles. Thought-provoking questions and Socratic methods are used to foster inquiry and critical thinking, complemented by opportunities for independent research. Personalized learning experiences align with the learner-centered approach, encouraging student choice and fostering a growth mindset. Continuous assessment and feedback are integral, incorporating both formative and authentic assessments alongside constructive



feedback. Regular reflection and adaptation of teaching strategies facilitate continuous improvement. Finally, collaboration with peers through professional learning communities, participation in conferences and seminars, and the sharing of best practices contribute to the professional growth of geography teachers. By adhering to this algorithm, prospective geography teachers will provide engaging, effective, and student-centered education that cultivates critical thinking, professional skills, and a lifelong passion for geography.

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