

## **Methodological Foundations for Developing Creative Competence in Pre-Service Primary School Teachers Based on an Integrative Approach**

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### **Abstract.**

This article analyzes the pedagogical aspects of developing creative competence in pre-service primary school teachers based on an integrative approach. The study examines the formation of creative competence through the principles of interdisciplinary integration, learner-centered education, problem-based and variable tasks, the unity of theory and practice, reflexivity, and continuity. It substantiates the development of students' creative thinking and their ability to find solutions in non-standard pedagogical situations through integrative lectures, seminar-based practical classes, methodological laboratories, and training sessions. The results of the study serve as a basis for developing scientific and methodological recommendations aimed at the effective implementation of the integrative approach in the professional training of pre-service primary school teachers.

**Keywords:** integrative approach, creative competence, pre-service primary school teachers, interdisciplinary integration, creative thinking, methodological laboratory, training, learner-centered education, problem-based learning, reflection, digital educational tools.

**An integrative approach** is the organization of the pedagogical process not as a set of separate disciplines, but as an organic unity of knowledge, skills, and types of

activity. Its main purpose is to develop students' pedagogical thinking in a holistic, systematic, and functional manner.

In the professional activity of primary school teachers, subjects are interconnected, and within a real educational environment they should be applied not in isolation, but in an integrated way. For example, language arts lessons may include tasks related to mathematics or environmental studies. This approach:

- develops students' ability to analyze problems comprehensively;
- enables the understanding of logical and methodological connections between disciplines;
- ensures the integration of methodological and psychological factors in professional decision-making.

The integrative approach also implies aligning educational content with modern technologies. For instance, the content of different subjects can be presented within a single program through interactive platforms or visual models. This provides students with opportunities to develop digital literacy and creative thinking.

**Creative competence** is the ability to act independently and innovatively in personal and professional activities and to find prompt and effective solutions to problematic situations.

The development of creative competence is based on a number of pedagogical principles. The first principle is **learner-centeredness**. According to this principle, students are provided with tasks tailored to their individual needs and interests. Moreover, offering alternative pathways and choices in creative projects enhances students' intrinsic motivation and enables them to participate in the learning process as active subjects.

The **second principle** is **activity and creative independence**. In problematic situations, students develop multiple solution options and, through both group and

individual projects, enhance their creative thinking and decision-making skills. This principle shapes students not as passive recipients of information, but as active subjects who generate creative decisions.

The **third principle** is the **unity of theory and practice**. Theoretical knowledge is connected with real pedagogical situations, and students learn in practice how to design lesson plans, make methodological decisions, and carry out assessment processes. This principle strengthens students' ability to apply theoretical knowledge to practical activity.

The **fourth principle** is **problem orientation and variability**. Through open-ended tasks and real pedagogical cases, students develop analytical and creative thinking. At the same time, they cultivate the ability to view a problem from different perspectives and solve it using diverse methods, which ensures flexibility in pedagogical situations.

The **fifth principle** is **reflexivity, continuity, and gradual development**. Students analyze their own activities through reflective journals, portfolios, and self-assessment. Creative competence is developed step by step, which contributes to the stable and systematic formation of professional preparedness. Thus, these principles serve as a fundamental methodological framework for ensuring students' continuous and effective professional development.

Based on these principles, students acquire the ability to apply theoretical knowledge in real pedagogical contexts, develop creative solutions to problematic situations, and make innovative decisions.

In the process of developing creative competence, a range of tools is applied in a systematic manner. **Integrative lectures** are conducted within a unified framework that combines pedagogy, psychology, teaching methodology, and information and communication technologies (ICT). These lectures enable students to gain a deeper

understanding of theoretical knowledge through problem-based questions, real pedagogical situations, and interdisciplinary connections. For example, interactive presentations that integrate topics from mathematics and language arts broaden students' thinking and provide opportunities to test interdisciplinary integration in practice.

**Practical classes** allow students to design interdisciplinary integrated lesson scenarios. In this process, students apply creative tasks based on innovative methods and, through collaborative work, develop communication skills, argumentation, and discussion competencies. This activity strengthens their ability to make independent and creative decisions.

A **methodological laboratory** supports students in designing lesson objectives, content, methods, and assessment criteria by utilizing innovative and interdisciplinary integration opportunities. Serving as an “experimental platform,” the laboratory develops students' methodological decision-making skills and expands their practical pedagogical thinking.

**Training sessions** provide opportunities to develop prompt solutions in unexpected pedagogical situations. This process contributes to the formation of students as flexible and creative decision-makers and strengthens their skills in solving real pedagogical problems.

**Information and digital resources** stimulate students' independent inquiry and creative thinking. Through LMS platforms, interactive presentations, online discussions, and visual models, an interactive and flexible learning environment can be created. These tools enhance students' information literacy and foster a creative approach to learning.

**Reflection and assessment tools** – such as portfolios, reflective journals, and criterion-based assessment – enable students to analyze their own activities and identify

their strengths and weaknesses. Through this process, students learn to consciously plan their professional growth and to develop creative competence in a step-by-step manner.

**Collaborative tools**, in turn, foster students' social and cultural skills. Through group projects and peer-review elements, students gain experience in developing methodological decisions collaboratively. As a result, creative competence is formed not only as an individual attribute but also as a professional competence that develops within a collaborative learning environment.

The **first recommendation** for developing the creative competence of pre-service primary school teachers is aimed at enriching the curriculum. In particular, it is necessary to increase the proportion of creative tasks based on an integrative approach within the course "*Pedagogy of Primary Education: Innovation and Integration.*" At the same time, the systematic introduction of interdisciplinary projects and innovative methods enables students to apply their knowledge in real pedagogical situations and to develop creative solutions.

The **second recommendation** is to expand the activities of the methodological laboratory. Through laboratory-based classes, students learn to independently design lessons, develop assessment criteria, and apply innovative technologies. This process contributes to the systematic development of their methodological thinking and to the formation of flexible and creative decision-making skills in real pedagogical contexts.

The **third recommendation** is to activate the use of digital resources and reflection. Through LMS platforms, interactive presentations, portfolios, and reflective tools, students are encouraged to engage in independent inquiry and creative activity. Effective use of digital tools enhances students' information literacy and supports the expression of creative ideas in visual and digital formats.

The **fourth recommendation** is the implementation of an assessment system. This involves the development of criteria and a monitoring system for assessing creative

competence. Through this system, students can track their level of development, identify strengths and weaknesses, and consciously improve their own performance. At the same time, the assessment system ensures the formation of future teachers as specialists with an innovative and flexible professional approach.

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