

## ENHANCING METHODOLOGICAL COMPETENCE OF PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN THE ERA OF DIGITALIZATION

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**Annotation:** The article analyzes the enhancement of methodological competence of future English language teachers in the era of digitalization. Methodological competence is defined as an integral component of professional training that includes pedagogical, methodological, digital, and reflective skills. The study emphasizes that systematic integration of digital technologies into teacher education improves professional readiness for modern educational challenges.

**Key words:** methodological competence, future English language teachers, digitalization, teacher education, digital pedagogy, professional training.

Digitalization has become one of the key factors influencing the modernization of education systems worldwide. The integration of digital technologies into teaching and learning processes has changed not only instructional tools but also pedagogical paradigms and professional requirements for teachers. In foreign language education, especially in English language teaching, these changes are particularly evident, as digital tools enable new forms of interaction, communication, and access to authentic language resources. Consequently, higher education institutions responsible for training future English language teachers must reconsider traditional approaches to methodological preparation.

Methodological competence plays a decisive role in ensuring the quality and effectiveness of English language teaching. It enables teachers to select appropriate methods, organize learning activities, assess learners' progress, and adapt instruction to diverse educational contexts. Researchers emphasize that the professional success of

language teachers largely depends on their level of methodological competence and their ability to apply innovative teaching approaches [1; 2]. In the era of digitalization, this competence must also include the capacity to integrate digital technologies into pedagogical practice in a meaningful and methodologically justified manner [3].

In pedagogical literature, methodological competence is defined as a complex and integrative professional quality that reflects a teacher's readiness and ability to plan, implement, and evaluate the teaching process effectively. It includes knowledge of teaching methods, understanding of language acquisition theories, skills of lesson planning and classroom management, assessment competence, and reflective abilities [4]. According to Shulman, methodological competence is closely related to pedagogical content knowledge, which forms the basis of effective teaching [5].

Modern researchers view methodological competence as a dynamic construct that develops continuously throughout a teacher's professional life [6]. This dynamic nature becomes especially important under conditions of rapid technological change, where teachers are required to constantly update their methodological repertoire. Studies conducted in the field of foreign language education indicate that traditional methodological training, which focuses mainly on conventional teaching techniques, is insufficient for preparing teachers to work in digitally enriched learning environments [7].

Digitalization has significantly expanded the methodological possibilities of English language teaching. Online platforms, learning management systems, mobile applications, and digital assessment tools offer new opportunities for organizing interactive, learner-centered, and personalized instruction. However, effective use of these tools requires not only technical skills but also a deep understanding of pedagogical principles and methodological strategies [8].

The technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) framework emphasizes that successful technology integration occurs at the intersection of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and technological knowledge [3]. From this perspective, enhancing methodological competence in the digital era involves developing future teachers' ability to align digital tools with instructional objectives and learners' needs. Empirical studies show that pre-service teachers often demonstrate fragmented digital skills and experience difficulties in applying them methodologically during teaching practice [9].

In the context of professional communicative competence development, Yuldasheva highlights the importance of technology-based instructional models that integrate subject-specific content and communicative tasks [10]. Her research demonstrates that methodological competence can be effectively enhanced through purposeful use of digital technologies in professionally oriented language education, which is particularly relevant for pre-service teachers. The enhancement of methodological competence of future English language teachers in the era of digitalization requires the creation of specific pedagogical conditions within teacher education programs. First, methodological training should be enriched with digital pedagogy components that focus on instructional design, online interaction, and technology-enhanced assessment. Such training should emphasize not only how to use digital tools but also why and when they should be applied from a methodological perspective [8]. Second, practice-oriented learning plays a crucial role in developing methodological competence. Teaching practicum, microteaching, and project-based learning supported by digital tools allow pre-service teachers to apply theoretical knowledge in authentic or simulated teaching contexts. Reflective activities, including self-analysis and peer feedback, further contribute to the development of methodological awareness and professional growth [6]. Third, collaborative learning environments

supported by digital technologies foster professional communication and exchange of methodological experience. Participation in online communities of practice encourages future teachers to engage in professional dialogue, share teaching resources, and reflect on their instructional decisions, which strengthens their methodological competence [11].

In conclusion, the era of digitalization has fundamentally changed the requirements for the methodological competence of future English language teachers. Methodological competence today extends beyond traditional teaching skills and includes the ability to integrate digital technologies into pedagogical practice in a purposeful and reflective manner. The analysis of scientific literature confirms that enhancing this competence requires systematic integration of digital pedagogy, practice-oriented training, and reflective approaches in teacher education programs. The findings of the study suggest that such an integrated approach increases the professional readiness and adaptability of future English language teachers to contemporary educational challenges. Further research may focus on empirical evaluation of specific digital models and tools that effectively support the development of methodological competence in different educational contexts.

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