The OSCAR PUBLISHING Services
International Journal of Pedagogics

VOLUME Vol.05 Issue08 2025
PAGE NO. 17-19
DOI 10.37547/ijp/Volume05Issue08-04

Modern Approaches in Preparing Future Primary School Teachers: Integration of Theory and Practice

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Received: 09 June 2025; **Accepted:** 05 July 2025; **Published:** 07 August 2025

Abstract: This article comprehensively covers the role of modern approaches in the training of primary school teachers, their theoretical foundations, and practical integration. In recent years, based on global changes in the education system, competency-based, innovative, technological, and reflexive approaches have become increasingly important. The article analyzes, based on statistical data, the integration of new pedagogical technologies, STEAM-education, ICT tools, and methodological educational practice in teacher training.

Keywords: Competency-based approach, primary school teacher, modern pedagogy, ICT, STEAM-education, reflection, educational technologies, pedagogical integration.

Introduction: In the 21st century, the educational process requires new content and forms. In particular, the primary education system is the main foundation in this regard. Therefore, it is necessary to train primary school teachers based on modern approaches. While traditional approaches are aimed only at imparting knowledge, modern approaches serve to develop students' independent thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills.

In the training of future primary school teachers, not only theoretical knowledge, but also practical exercises, innovative technologies, information and communication tools, and the formation of professional competencies are of great importance.

Theory of the competency-based approach. The competency-based approach allows for the implementation of personality-oriented learning in pedagogical activity. In this approach, the following competencies of the teacher should be formed:

- Methodological competence: designing, planning the educational process, creating the content of the lesson;
- Methodological competence: selection of teaching methods, application of alternative strategies;
- Psychological competence: taking into account age characteristics, understanding the individual needs of students;
- Social competence: working in a team, being effective in communication.

In the competency-based approach, the main focus is not on the student's knowledge, but on the levels of cognition, understanding, practical application, analysis, synthesis, and assessment. Teachers are also trained based on this system.

Modern pedagogical technologies

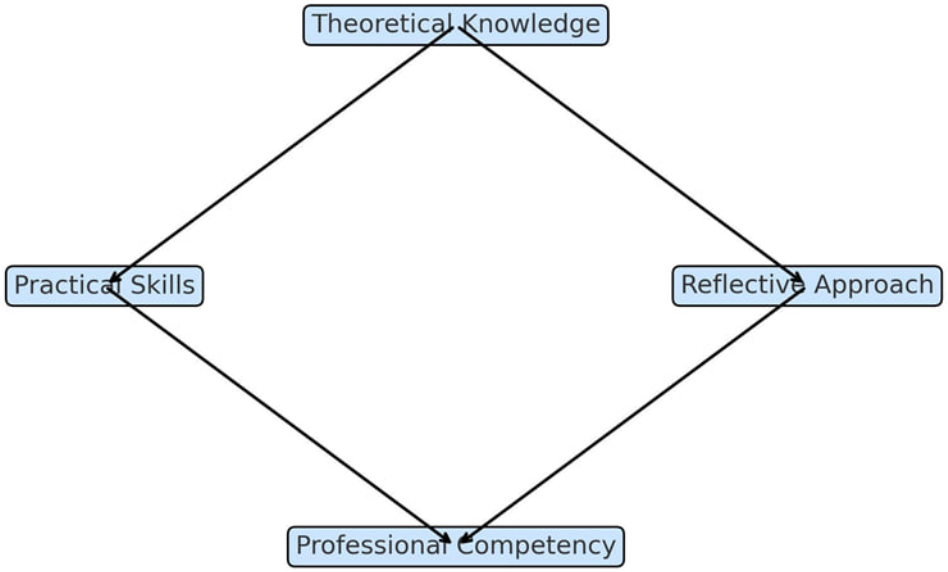
The following modern technologies are widely used in the training of future teachers:

Flipped Classroom. In this model, the student comes to the lesson ready: before the lesson, they study video lessons or materials. In the lesson, practical exercises, discussions, and assignments are carried out. The teacher provides guidance.

STEAM education. The STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) approach is aimed at developing students' interdisciplinary knowledge and skills. Future teachers learn to design lessons in this style. For example, in a simple mathematics lesson, the element of art is combined with technological aspects.

Reflective approach. Reflection is a thinking activity necessary for the teacher to evaluate their own activity, analyze and improve the results of the lesson. With this approach, the teacher is constantly searching for their methodology.

Figure 1. Structure of the competency-based approach model



Pedagogical practice is the main stage in preparing a teacher for a real educational environment. The following aspects make integration into practice effective:

Microteaching: conducting and analyzing short, focused lessons;

Observation: observation of lessons by experienced teachers, keeping a reflective log;

Portfolio management: monitoring the teacher's development by collecting methodological developments, lesson plans, and projects.

Modern ICT tools have become an integral part of the educational process. The following are important in teacher training:

Use of multimedia tools: presentations, animations, audio/video materials;

Educational platforms: conducting distance learning through Google Classroom, Moodle, Zoom, MS Teams;

Conducting interactive lessons through online testing and assessment systems: Kahoot, Quizizz, Mentimeter.

Over the past five years, the number of primary school teachers trained based on modern approaches has increased dramatically:

Table 1.

Statistics of approaches to the training of primary school teachers (2020-2024)

Year	Traditional Approach	Modern Approach
2020	500	100
2021	520	180
2022	540	270
2023	530	390
2024	525	480

As can be seen, the number of teachers trained based on modern approaches increased from 100 in 2020 to 480 in 2024. This indicates that educational institutions are actively implementing new methods.

The application of modern approaches in the training of future primary school teachers is necessary not only for increasing the professional competence of teachers, but also for improving the quality of education. Through integrated learning, the use of ICT tools, STEAM elements, and reflexive approaches, the teacher consistently improves their pedagogical activity.

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