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The Content And Structural Components Of Metacompetence In The Professional Training Of Prospective Primary School Teachers

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the content, structure, and functional characteristics of metacompetence in the professional training of prospective primary school teachers. The research aims to identify the principal components of metacompetence and determine their significance for developing professional independence, reflective thinking, and adaptive pedagogical decision-making. The study employs theoretical analysis, comparative interpretation, and pedagogical modeling. The findings propose a multidimensional structure comprising cognitive-metacognitive, motivational-value, operational-regulatory, reflective-evaluative, and adaptive-communicative components. Particular attention is given to integrating these components into the teaching of Pedagogical Mastery. The proposed framework provides a theoretical foundation for improving professional training and developing diagnostic criteria for assessing metacompetence.

KEYWORDS: Metacompetence, prospective primary school teachers, professional training, metacognitive skills, pedagogical reflection, self-regulation, professional competence, pedagogical mastery.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary primary education requires teachers who possess not only professional knowledge and instructional skills but also the ability to independently regulate their pedagogical activities. Rapid changes in educational technologies, teaching methodologies, and learners' individual needs have increased the importance of developing higher-order professional competencies during university preparation. In this context, metacompetence represents an essential characteristic of a teacher's readiness for continuous professional improvement.

Metacompetence can be understood as an integrative professional capacity that enables individuals to consciously manage their cognitive processes, evaluate their professional capabilities, select appropriate strategies, and adapt acquired knowledge to unfamiliar situations. Unlike individual subject-specific competencies, metacompetence regulates the effective application and further development of other professional competencies.

Flavell's theory of metacognition emphasizes the relationship between cognitive knowledge, monitoring, and strategic regulation [1]. Pintrich further explains the significance of metacognitive knowledge for educational planning and assessment [2]. These theoretical perspectives provide a foundation for examining metacompetence within teacher education.

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The purpose of this research is to clarify the content of metacompetence, identify its structural components, and determine their functional relationships in the professional preparation of prospective primary school teachers.

The research was conducted through theoretical and methodological analysis of scientific perspectives concerning professional competence, metacognition, self-regulated learning, and reflective teaching. Comparative analysis was applied to distinguish metacompetence from related concepts, while pedagogical modeling was employed to formulate its structural characteristics.

Zimmerman's theory of self-regulated learning was used to explain the relationship between goal setting, strategic action, and self-evaluation [3]. Shulman's concept of pedagogical knowledge supported the examination of professional decision-making [4]. Hatton and Smith's research on reflection in teacher education provided a theoretical basis for defining reflective processes within professional preparation [5].

The identified theoretical relationships were synthesized into a conceptual structure applicable to the Pedagogical Mastery course. The investigation did not involve experimental measurements; therefore, its results represent theoretically derived methodological propositions.

The theoretical analysis identified five interconnected components of metacompetence that characterize prospective primary school teachers' capacity for independent professional development.

The cognitive-metacognitive component reflects awareness of professional knowledge, understanding of personal cognitive capabilities, and the ability to select appropriate learning strategies. It enables prospective teachers to identify gaps in their methodological preparation and determine effective ways of acquiring additional knowledge. For example, when preparing a mathematics lesson, a future teacher should recognize which instructional explanations require further clarification and independently select resources for improving them.

The motivational-value component represents professional responsibility, intrinsic motivation, commitment to continuous learning, and recognition of reflective development as a professional necessity. Its importance lies in creating internal conditions for purposeful self-improvement. Prospective teachers with a developed motivational orientation are expected to demonstrate greater willingness to analyze difficulties and revise ineffective instructional approaches.

The operational-regulatory component concerns the practical organization of professional activities through planning, monitoring, strategy selection, and corrective action. It connects metacognitive awareness with instructional performance. Within the Pedagogical Mastery course, this component may be developed through pedagogical simulations requiring students to establish objectives, anticipate classroom challenges, and modify teaching procedures according to changing circumstances.

The reflective-evaluative component involves critical examination of professional decisions, recognition of instructional mistakes, and assessment of learning outcomes. Reflection becomes particularly significant when prospective teachers compare their intended pedagogical objectives with actual classroom responses. Video analysis, reflective journals, and structured peer feedback can support the development of evidence-based professional judgments.

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The adaptive-communicative component reflects the capacity to transfer professional knowledge to unfamiliar situations while maintaining effective interaction with pupils, colleagues, and parents. It requires flexibility, communicative sensitivity, and consideration of individual learning differences. Its development can be supported through classroom case analysis and collaborative problem-solving activities.

The relationship among these components is dynamic. Cognitive awareness informs professional planning, motivation sustains purposeful activity, regulation guides instructional implementation, reflection evaluates outcomes, and adaptability enables the transfer of acquired experience. Their integration provides a conceptual basis for diagnosing metacompetence through observable indicators of professional behavior.

The proposed structure demonstrates that metacompetence cannot be reduced to metacognitive knowledge or reflective thinking alone. It represents a broader professional formation integrating cognitive, motivational, behavioral, evaluative, and communicative processes.

Shulman's understanding of pedagogical reasoning supports the importance of connecting professional knowledge with instructional decisions [4]. Similarly, research on reflective teacher education indicates that reflection requires deliberate methodological support rather than spontaneous self-observation [5].

For prospective primary school teachers, the Pedagogical Mastery course offers opportunities to integrate these processes through practical assignments, simulated pedagogical situations, and self-assessment activities. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the proposed structure requires empirical verification using reliable diagnostic instruments and longitudinal observations.

Metacompetence constitutes an integrative characteristic of prospective primary school teachers' professional readiness. Its content encompasses conscious professional learning, self-regulation, reflective evaluation, and adaptive instructional performance.

The proposed five-component structure establishes a theoretical basis for designing educational activities and assessment criteria within professional teacher preparation. Integrating these components into the Pedagogical Mastery course may contribute to developing independent pedagogical reasoning and readiness for continuous professional improvement. Further experimental investigation is necessary to determine the effectiveness of the proposed methodological framework.

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