

## THE IMPORTANCE OF A DIFFERENTIATED APPROACH IN DEVELOPING THE PROFESSIONAL AND PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

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**Abstract.** In the era of globalization, modern society places demands on the education system to train highly qualified, motivated, competitive, proactive, and spiritually and physically healthy individuals. In this regard, future primary school teachers must also possess professional-pedagogical competence. Each teacher has professional-pedagogical competence, which reflects the unity of theoretical and practical preparation within the holistic structure of personality and characterizes their professional mastery. The content of professional competence includes the level of correspondence between professional knowledge and skills, regulatory requirements, and levels of professional training in a specific field of activity.

**Keywords:** differentiated approach, differentiated education, professional-pedagogical competence, primary school teachers, higher education, teaching methods, individual characteristics, intellectual development, students' abilities, pedagogical skills, innovative potential, internal differentiation, external differentiation, educational process, teaching effectiveness.

It is known that today, as in other stages of education, differentiated instruction is widely used in higher education. In foreign pedagogy, the concept of "differentiation" emerged alongside the concept of "education" in the late 2005s. One of the first to use this term, N.K. Goncharov, considered differentiation as the division of educational content. M.A. Melnikov also emphasized the effectiveness of a differentiated approach in the education system for primary school teachers. He noted that organizing education based on differentiation across various directions of general and vocational education creates broader opportunities for students to choose professions according to their interests and inclinations.

Differentiated education is one of the organizational forms of the educational process, in which students are divided into groups according to certain characteristics, and the learning process is organized accordingly. The term "differentiation" originates from Latin ("differentia"), meaning difference or distinction.

One of the main features of differentiated education is grouping learners according to their characteristics and adapting, supplementing, or optimizing educational materials considering the specifics of each group.

In differentiated education, learners are classified according to the following characteristics:

1. Level of intellectual development (determined by IQ tests);
2. Type of thinking;
3. Temperament;
4. Interests;
5. Aptitude and abilities;
6. Chosen specialization, etc.

The main focus of differentiated education is the instruction of gifted and talented students. Currently, global pedagogy shows increasing interest in this issue. For example, there is a European Association for High Ability, whose goal is to study and promote education for gifted individuals. Criteria for identifying gifted children and ways to support talented students are also being studied.

N.N. Roganovsky, while discussing pedagogical education based on a differentiated approach, does not provide a strict definition but describes various implementation forms. At the first (preparatory) stage, the main task is to identify and develop the inclinations and interests of



future primary school teachers by organizing courses and groups for in-depth study of specific subjects. At the second (main) stage, he proposes dividing all courses into two directions—academic and professional—defining compulsory and elective subjects, and presenting them at two levels: general cultural and advanced. The analysis of these forms shows that their application reflects the idea of dividing educational content.

If this approach is applied to the process of forming students' professional qualities, it can be defined as creating different conditions for teaching in various homogeneous groups based on methodological, psychological-pedagogical, and organizational-management measures. Teaching requires special knowledge and experience from primary school teachers, and new approaches demand the use of modern methods and technologies. Educational programs and textbooks emphasize the development of skills such as patriotism, determination, ideological resilience, kindness, responsibility, tolerance, innovative thinking, and diligence.

The application of a differentiated approach in forming the professional-pedagogical competence of future primary school teachers requires considering their interests, motivations, psychophysiological characteristics (age, cognitive abilities), level of pedagogical mastery, and personal capabilities. Based on this, it is appropriate to develop students' innovative potential through diverse curricula tailored to their individual and general characteristics.

V.M. Monakhov identifies two types of differentiated instruction: external and internal. External differentiation involves creating relatively stable groups based on certain principles (interests, inclinations, abilities), where the content and requirements differ. Internal differentiation refers to teaching students differently within a group selected by random characteristics, focusing on maximizing consideration of individual and group traits. According to Monakhov, internal differentiation can be implemented through traditional individualization or through a level-based system.

According to V.G. Boltyansky and G.D. Gleyzer, differentiated instruction should consider a certain level of culture and knowledge as criteria for mastering educational material. Based on this, they classify future primary school teachers' pedagogical knowledge into general-cultural, practical, and creative levels. General-cultural knowledge requires understanding and explaining key ideas; practical knowledge involves deep comprehension and application in real-life situations; creative knowledge includes applying knowledge in both practical and pedagogical contexts.

Thus, according to the authors, differentiation involves objectively identifying different levels of mastering educational material and providing criteria to assess students' achievement at these levels.

The introduction of "external" and "internal" differentiation led to broader interpretations of "differentiated education," which is now understood as education based on dividing content and considering students' individual characteristics, implemented through multi-level systems.

In this study, both aspects of "differentiated education" are considered. On one hand, forms such as math clubs, lectures, elective courses, and specialized classes represent content differentiation. On the other hand, differentiation within lessons is expanding through teaching methods and tools.

Differentiated education pays special attention to students' professional preparation. It aims to deepen professional-pedagogical knowledge and guide students toward specific professions. It involves mastering core subjects in depth, focusing on specialized areas, and studying necessary materials. Additional classes or in-depth study of selected subjects may be planned based on institutional and student capabilities. Students are grouped according to interests, and education is oriented toward specific professions.

Applying this approach to future primary school teachers requires managing their professional-pedagogical activities and considering differences in their pedagogical potential.

Thus, in this article:



1. The development trends of the concept of “differentiated education” are identified;
2. Various approaches to defining the concept at the current stage of pedagogical development are highlighted;
3. The most relevant approach to defining “differentiated education” is determined;
4. Different definitions of the concept are analyzed;
5. The definition by G.D. Gleyzer is taken as the main one, describing differentiated education as a system of managing students’ cognitive activity based on their professional-pedagogical differences.

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