

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE AND METHODOLOGICAL CULTURE AS FACTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PEDAGOGICAL SKILLS OF FUTURE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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Abstract

The relevance of the study is determined by the growing requirements for the training of future foreign language teachers in the context of innovative changes in education. The aim is to determine the impact of the level of professional competence and methodological culture on the development of pedagogical skills, taking into account the type of educational environment and participation in competitions. Methods: questionnaire survey, psychodiagnostics (motivational, emotional, cognitive indicators), expert assessment, Mann-Whitney U test, Wilcoxon test. Sample – 140 students. The results showed higher indicators of professional competence (empathy – $U = 423.000$; optimism – $U = 434.000$; motivation for success – $U = 520.600$) and methodological culture (cognitive indicator – $U = 462.600$) in students of the innovative group. Participation in competitions correlated with tolerance and awareness, while their avoidance – with rigidity. The influence of the innovative environment and competitive activity on the development of pedagogical skills was proven. The academic novelty is the comprehensive analysis of the component structure of professional competence in the context of practice. Prospects for further research may be studying the dynamics of changes at different stages of professional training.

Keywords: professional Competence, Methodological Culture, Pedagogical Skills, Pedagogical Practice, Innovative Educational Environment.

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COMPETÊNCIA PROFISSIONAL E CULTURA METODOLÓGICA COMO FATORES NO DESENVOLVIMENTO DAS COMPETÊNCIAS PEDAGÓGICAS DOS FUTUROS PROFESSORES DE LÍNGUAS ESTRANGEIRAS

Resumo

A relevância do estudo está nas crescentes exigências para a formação de futuros professores de línguas estrangeiras no contexto da inovação educacional. O objetivo é determinar o impacto do nível de competência profissional e da cultura metodológica no desenvolvimento das competências pedagógicas, tendo em vista o tipo de ambiente educativo e a participação nas competições. Métodos: questionário, psicodiagnósticos (indicadores motivacionais, emocionais, cognitivos), avaliação de especialistas e análises estatísticas (teste U de Mann-Whitney teste de Wilcoxon). Amostra foi composta por 140 estudantes. Os resultados indicaram que os estudantes do grupo inovador apresentaram maiores níveis de competência profissional (empatia - $U = 423.000$; otimismo - $U = 434.000$; motivação para o sucesso - $U = 520,600$ e cultura metodológica (indicador cognitivo - $U = 462,600$). A participação em competições correlacionou-se com tolerância e conscientização, enquanto sua evitação - com rigidez. Foi comprovada a influência do ambiente inovador e da atividade competitiva no desenvolvimento das competências pedagógicas. A novidade acadêmica é a análise abrangente da estrutura componente da competência profissional no contexto da prática. As perspectivas para futuras pesquisas podem estar estudando a dinâmica das mudanças em diferentes estágios da formação profissional.

Palavras-chave: Competência Profissional, Cultura Metodológica, Competências Pedagógicas, Prática Pedagógica, Ambiente Educativo Inovador.

LA COMPETENCIA PROFESIONAL Y LA CULTURA METODOLÓGICA COMO FACTORES EN EL DESARROLLO DE LAS COMPETENCIAS PEDAGÓGICAS DE LOS FUTUROS PROFESORES DE LENGUAS

Resumen

La pertinencia del estudio viene determinada por las crecientes necesidades de formación de futuros profesores de lenguas extranjeras en el contexto de cambios innovadores en la enseñanza. El objetivo es determinar el impacto del nivel de competencia profesional y la cultura metodológica en el desarrollo de las competencias pedagógicas, teniendo en cuenta el tipo de entorno educativo y la participación en concursos. Métodos: encuesta por cuestionario, psicodiagnósticos (indicadores motivacionales, emocionales, cognitivos), evaluación experta, prueba U de Mann-Whitney, prueba de Wilcoxon. Muestra - 140 alumnos. Los resultados mostraron mayores indicadores de competencia

profesional (empatía - $U = 423.000$; optimismo - $U = 434.000$; motivación para el éxito - $U = 520.600$) y cultura metodológica (indicador cognitivo - $U = 462.600$) en estudiantes del grupo innovador. La participación en competencias se correlaciona con la tolerancia y la conciencia, mientras que su evitación - con la rigidez. Se demostró la influencia del entorno innovador y de la actividad competitiva en el desarrollo de las competencias pedagógicas. La novedad académica es el análisis global de la estructura componente de la competencia profesional en el contexto de la práctica. Las perspectivas para la investigación futura pueden ser el estudio de la dinámica de los cambios en diferentes etapas de la formación profesional.

Palabras clave: competencia profesional, cultura metodológica, competencias pedagógicas, práctica pedagógica, entorno educativo innovador.

1. Introduction

The requirements for the professional training of future teachers are increasing in the context of global changes and national reforms (Turlybekov et al., 2024). This is especially true for foreign language teachers, who must combine professional knowledge with pedagogical skills, creativity, and adaptability (Bisenbaeva & Sarguzhinova, 2022). In this context, the development of professional competence (PC) and methodological culture (MC) is becoming more relevant as key factors of effective pedagogical activity (Bentri et al., 2022). PC is understood as a holistic formation that encompasses activity, personal, and communicative components (Botirova, 2024), which are intensively developed during pedagogical practice (Li, 2023). At the same time, MC reflects the teacher's ability to reflect, analyse, and consciously choose teaching strategies (Huang, 2024).

Despite a significant number of studies on the professional teacher training, insufficient attention is paid to the empirical study of the relationship between the type of educational environment, students' participation in pedagogical skills (PS) competitions, and the level of their PC and MC (Falloon, 2020). Modern pedagogy requires future teachers to have flexibility of thinking, tolerance for uncertainty, a high level of empathy, and a willingness to constantly grow professionally (Zhang et al., 2024). These qualities may or may not be manifested depending on the conditions of pedagogical practice (Kravets, et al., 2023). Students' participation in PS competitions deserves special attention as a kind of challenge and an opportunity to reveal professional potential (Li et al., 2024). These activities stimulate self-assessment, critical thinking, and the public presentation of outcomes, thereby contributing to the formation of both PC and MC. Nevertheless, it remains unclear whether such participation consistently correlates with higher indicators of professional development (Ma et al., 2022). Therefore, empirical research is needed to examine both quantitatively and qualitatively the influence of the educational environment and

active participation in competitions on the professional growth of philology students majoring in Secondary Education (Language and Literature – English).

The aim of the study is to identify the influence of the PC and MC of future foreign language teachers on their PS level in different educational environments and depending on participation or non-participation in PS competitions.

Research objectives: a) Assess the level of students' awareness of the content of PC and MC, as well as their role in the PS development through a questionnaire using the author's methodology Self-assessment of PS and MC; b) Conduct a comparative analysis of the PC indicators of students who underwent pedagogical practice in an innovative and traditional educational environment; Determine the level of MC components in students of different groups, in particular cognitive, procedural, axiological, and performance; and d) Establish statistically significant differences between students who participated in PS competitions and those who did not have such experience in terms of PS indicators and its determinants.

2. Literature review

Recent studies consider PC of future foreign language teachers as a multidimensional model that encompasses subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, personal qualities, and a reflective approach to one's own practice. Zhang et al. (2021) found that, in Chinese universities, the main components are language proficiency, pedagogical ethics, methodological awareness and reflection, emphasizing the need to use academic results in teaching. Similarly, Scherzinger & Brahm (2023) conducted a review of 79 studies on bilingual education and identified 16 core teacher competencies, including linguistic mastery, didactics, intercultural communication, and psychological knowledge. The authors note that although previous research has proposed varying component classifications, the overall framework remains integrative and aligns with prevailing Western pedagogical models.

Legutke, Saunders, and Schart (2022) analyse the components of professional knowledge of foreign language teachers from historical and methodological perspectives, emphasizing the importance of integrating theoretical knowledge and practical experience in the course of professional training. In their opinion, such a balance is a prerequisite for the formation of holistic professional competence. Continuing this line, Gerlach (2022) summarizes the results of research in this area, pointing out the existing gaps and the need for a clear distinction between the teacher's knowledge, skills, and actions. He emphasizes the importance of didactic knowledge and reflective ability as key elements of the teacher's professional identity.

Expanding the discussion, Guttke (2023) focuses on a specific methodological skill – cognitive activation, having analysed 29 studies and found a lack of its clear definition and valid assessment tools. According to the author, this gap underscores the need to strengthen deep, meaningful learning and

methodological reflection as integral aspects of methodological culture in teacher preparation.

In parallel, Bashkir et al. (2021) demonstrated the effectiveness of distance project-based learning for developing lexical competence and confidence in PS, emphasizing the role of interactive digital methods in professional training. In a further study, Biletska et al. (2024) confirmed that the combination of academic, activity-based, and humanistic approaches enhances motivation and practical value of training. Loving pedagogy is another component of PS, which is considered an affective-cognitive strategy.

A growing body of research links affective engagement and creativity to pedagogical success. Zhi & Wang (2023) showed using structural modelling that “love for students” is positively correlated with the success and creativity of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers, where creativity is a mediator of this effect. Their conclusions are supported by experimental data and have a powerful psychosocial impact – the authors agree with this approach to supporting teachers’ mental health. The study by Derakhshan et al. (2023) found that creativity, combined with loving pedagogy, significantly increased teacher engagement, with creativity having a stronger impact. They support the opinion that creativity is critically important in teaching, an approach that most experts fully agree with. Meihami (2022) argues that creativity can be systematically developed through reflection, deep knowledge, autonomy, and psychological qualities; similar findings are supported by other authors.

Recent technological innovations have also reshaped the methodological culture of teacher education. In Ukraine, Vakaliuk et al. (2022) demonstrated the effectiveness of game-based digital simulations to stimulate students’ creative use of technology. The experiment confirmed the growth of digital skills, but the authors make a critical observation that such tools should complement classical practices for the comprehensive development of mastery. Ping (2022) agrees with this opinion and emphasizes the importance of professional identity and motivation as the basis of a competent teacher: a teacher finds it difficult to implement the acquired knowledge in practice without a strong “I”. Usyk et al. (2021) substantiate the need for professional guidance in learning English.

Sugere-se finalizar a revisão de literatura com um parágrafo (pequeno) que articule de forma crítica as lacunas identificadas e a justificativa para a pesquisa atual.

3. Methods and Materials

3.1 Research design

The empirical study was conducted aimed at comprehensively assessing the PC and MC of future foreign language teachers. The study was implemented in four sequential stages:



Preparatory stage – involved sample formation and the definition of inclusion criteria, namely students in the 3rd–4th year of the Secondary Education (Language and Literature – English) program who had completed their teaching practice.

Diagnostic stage - consisting of conducting a questionnaire survey, testing, and expert evaluation of students' pedagogical activity during practice.

Data analysis stage -data processing using statistical analysis in SPSS 26.0 for Windows.

Interpretation stage - consisted of analysing and interpreting the obtained results to find out how the type of educational environment (traditional or innovative) and students' participation in competitions affect their PS level.

This study complied with the ethical standards for educational research and institutional regulations of Mukachevo State University. Since the research involved only anonymous student surveys without any intervention or risk, formal approval by a separate ethics committee was not required. All participants provided informed consent, and their confidentiality was ensured.

3.2 Research methods

Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect and analyse data:

- Survey method: Conducted by an independent expert in order to identify a subjective assessment of the development of professional skills of future foreign language teachers. The questionnaire contained 6 closed-ended questions and covered the following blocks: the purpose of pedagogical activity, key factors of PM, MC level, difficulties of teaching practice, gender, and year of study. The collected data were summarized in diagrams for further statistical analysis.

- Psychodiagnostic methods (Eysenck, Eilers, Leontiev, Mehrabian) were applied to assess the motivational, emotional, communicative, and value components of the future teachers' PC.

- Expert assessment by practice leaders was used to objectively verify the students' PS level and compare with their self-assessment.

3.3 Statistical methods

Descriptive statistics were used (mean, median, standard deviation) to summarize the data. The Mann–Whitney U test was applied for intergroup analysis, and the Wilcoxon test was used for related samples. All statistical analyses were performed using SPSS 26.0 for Windows. The significance level

was set at $p < 0.05$ for all tests, and results with $p < 0.01$ were considered highly significant.

3.4 Research sample

The study involved 140 3rd–4th year students from three higher education institutions (HEIs) majoring in Secondary Education (Language and Literature - English) and also studying German as a second foreign language. The sample included students from: 1) the Department of English Language, Literature, and Teaching Methods of the Faculty of Humanities of Mukachevo State University; 2) the Department of English Language and Teaching Methods of Primary Education of the Educational and Research Institute of Pedagogy of Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University; and 3) the Faculty of Social and Pedagogical Sciences and Foreign Philology of the Municipal Establishment Kharkiv Humanitarian-Pedagogical Academy of the Kharkiv Regional Council.

All students master courses in the methodology of teaching foreign languages, in particular English and German, and take an active part in teaching practice for a deeper investigation of the level of their PC and MC. The sample included only those students who had completed a teaching practice in schools with different educational models (traditional and innovative). The groups were formed according to two criteria: Group 1 – 70 students who had a practice in innovative educational institutions (using interactive methods, new technologies, project-based learning); Group 2 – 70 students who had a practice in institutions with a traditional educational model. The subgroups were also compared according to the criterion of participation/non-participation in PS competitions. The selected number is sufficient to ensure the validity of non-parametric statistical analysis (significance level $p < 0.05$) and trace the influence of the type of practice and activity on the studied parameters. Table 1 presents a detailed characteristics of the students who participated in the study.

Table 1 - Characteristics of philology students who participated in the study (n = 140).

Indicator	Traditional practice (n = 70)	Innovative practice (n = 70)
Participation in pedagogical competitions, conferences	15%	42%
Self-assessment of the PC level (high/medium/low)	12% 72% 16%	39% 58% 3%
Frequency of improving one's qualifications (courses, trainings, certificates)	no more than 1 time per year — 68%	≥ 2 times per year — 74%

Interest in academic activity (participation in research, publications)	21%	48%
Application of interactive methods during practice	35%	81%

Source: Developed by the authors (2025).

3.5 Instruments

Table 2 presents the tools used to diagnose the main components of the PC and MC of future foreign language teachers. Each method corresponds to a specific component and allows obtaining quantitative and qualitative indicators that serve as the basis for comparative analysis between the studied groups.

Table 2 - Research tools.

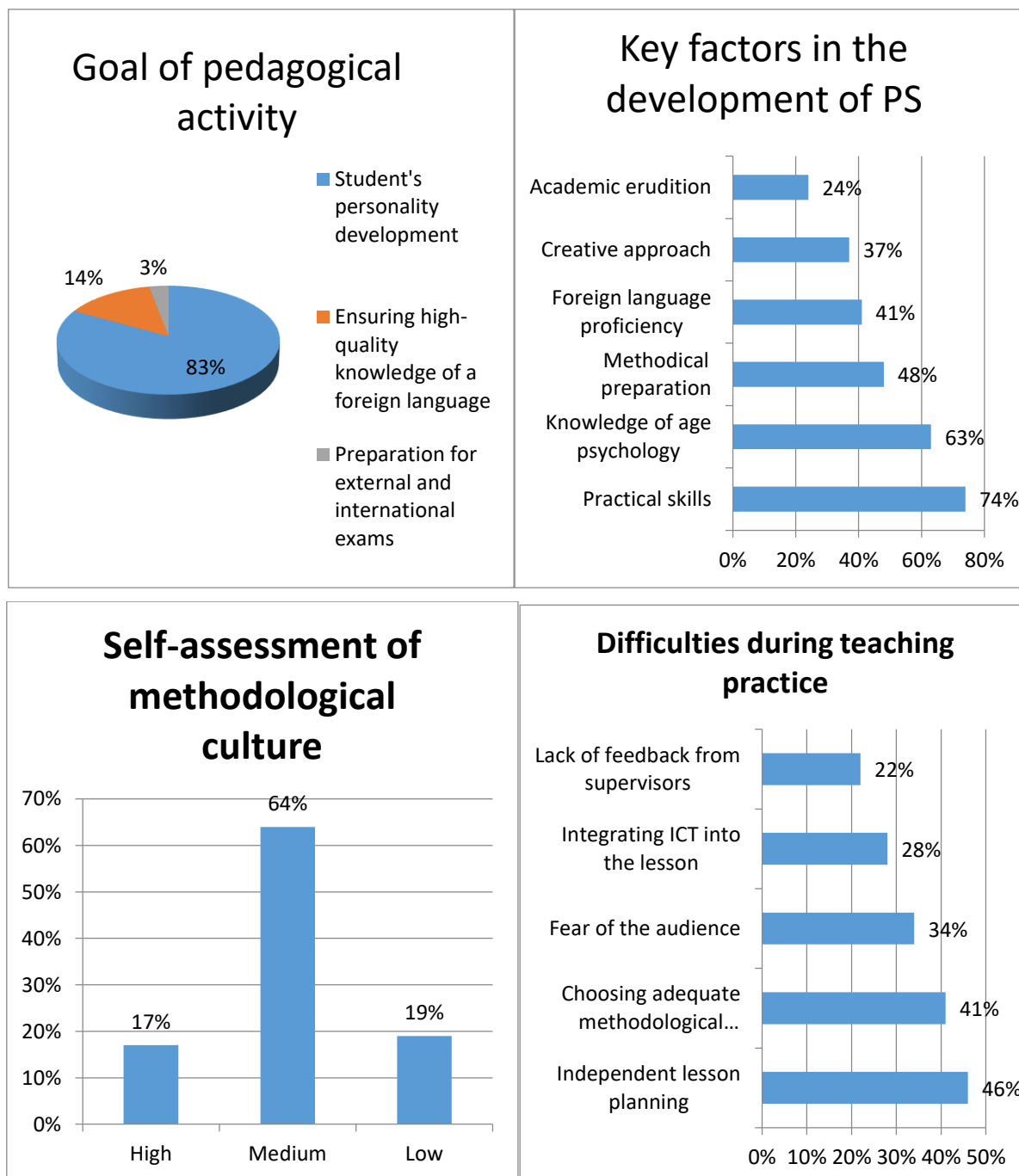
Component	Method	Purpose
Activity	Career Anchors (E. Schein)	Determining professional orientations
	Motivation for Success (T. Ehlers)	Identifying the willingness to achieve results
	Failure Avoidance Motivation (T. Ehlers)	Studying the influence of fear of error on professional activity
Personal	Meaningful Life Orientations" Test (D. Leontiev)	Determining life goals, level of awareness, and integrity of motivations
	Self-esteem of Mental States Test (H. Eysenck)	Investigating anxiety, aggressiveness, frustration, and rigidity levels
	A Measure of Emotional Empathy (adapted questionnaire of A. Mehrabian)	Determining the ability to empathize, creation of a positive emotional climate
Socio-communicative	Socio-Communicative Competence Test	Assessment of adaptability, optimism, tolerance to uncertainty
MC	Author's technique Self-Assessment of Professional Competence and Methodological Culture	Determining the level of procedural, cognitive, axiological, and performance components

Source: Developed by the authors based on generalized approaches (2025).

4. Results and Discussion

A survey was conducted in the study using the author's technique Self-Assessment of PM and MC for the purpose of an in-depth analysis of the level of students' awareness of the role of pedagogical activity, factors of professional growth, and difficulties during teaching practice.

Figure 1 - Visualizes the obtained data and Self-assessment of PM and MC



Source: Developed by the authors (2025).

The absolute majority of respondents (83%) identified the development of the student's personality as the main goal of pedagogical activity, while only 14% indicated ensuring high-quality knowledge of a foreign language, and another 3% – preparation for external and international examinations. This result indicates the dominance of the humanistic paradigm in the students' pedagogical beliefs. The students recognized practical skills (74%), followed by knowledge of age psychology (63%), methodological training (48%), and foreign language proficiency (41%) the most important factor. Comparatively less importance was given to a creative approach (37%) and academic erudition (24%). This indicates the students' focus on a practice-oriented model of professionalism with the dominance of applied competencies. The largest share of respondents (64%) assessed their MC level as average, 19% – as low, and only 17% – as high. This indicates the need to improve the research and methodological component of professional training and to increase the emphasis on research skills and reflection in teacher education. The most common challenges were: independent lesson planning (46%), fear of the audience (41%), integration of ICT into the educational process (28%), lack of feedback from the supervisor (22%). These results demonstrate that even motivationally mature students have significant problems related to autonomy, confidence, and adaptation to the real educational environment.

The obtained results indicate the dominance of a personally oriented approach in the perception of the pedagogical role and a high assessment of the importance of practical skills and psychological knowledge. At the same time, typical difficulties were identified, in particular in the field of methodological planning, which emphasizes the importance of the MC development as a key factor in the PS development in future foreign language teachers. A comparative analysis found statistically significant differences between the groups of students who underwent teaching practice in a traditional educational environment and those who underwent practice in innovative conditions (Table 3).

Table 3 - Comparative analysis of the PC components of philology students depending on the type of educational environment during the practice.

Questionnaires	Indicators of Professional Competence	Average rank		Mann-Whitney U test, P
		Traditional conditions	Innovative conditions	
Career Anchors	Professional competence	34.850	37.140	590.500
	Management	29.850	41.990	415.500; p=0.013
	Autonomy (independence)	35.910	36.110	627.500

Motivation for Success	Motivation for success	32.880	39.050	521.500
Failure Avoidance Motivation	Failure avoidance motivation	35.440	36.570	611.000
Self-esteem of Mental States Test	Anxiety	42.210	29.980	414.000; p=0.012
	Frustration	41.620	30.550	434.500; p=0.023
	Aggressiveness	34.810	37.180	589.000
	Rigidity	42.750	29.450	395.000; p=0.006
Meaningful Life Orientations	Life goals	31.840	40.070	485.000
	Life process	31.580	40.320	476.000
	Life performance	33.850	38.110	555.500
	Locus of Control - Self	31.220	40.660	463.500; p=0.053
	Locus of Control - life	35.230	36.700	606.000
	Overall Score	32.750	39.180	517.000
Emotional Empathy	Empathy	30.070	41.790	423.000; p=0.016
	Affective empathy	29.670	42.180	409.000; p=0.010
Socio-Communicative Competence	Socio-communicative adaptability	39.150	32.950	521.000
	Striving for agreement	37.780	34.290	569.000
	Tolerance	28.170	43.640	356.500; p=0.002
	Optimism	30.380	41.480	434.000; p=0.023
	Frustration tolerance	36.520	35.510	613.000
Methodological Culture	Procedural indicator	31.580	40.320	476.000
	Cognitive indicator	31.220	40.660	463.500; p = 0.053

	Axiological indicator	31.840	40.070	485.000
	Performance indicator	33.850	38.110	555.500

Source: Developed by the authors (2025).

Comparative analysis of the results showed that philology students who underwent teaching practice in an innovative educational environment showed higher indicators in most PC components compared to those who underwent teaching practice in traditional educational environment. In particular, statistically significant differences were recorded on the Management scale ($p=0.013$), indicating better management skills in students from the innovative group. They also had lower levels of anxiety ($p=0.012$), frustration ($p=0.023$), and rigidity ($p=0.006$), which indicates better emotional stability. Along with this, students from the innovative group had higher indicators of empathy ($p=0.016$), effective empathy ($p=0.010$), tolerance ($p=0.002$), and optimism ($p=0.023$), which confirms the positive impact of the innovative educational environment on the development of emotional and social components of PC. So, practice in innovative educational environment contributes to a more effective of PC in philology students. Such results give grounds to argue innovative educational environment contributes to a more developed MC, which is an important component of the PS of a future foreign language teacher. At the next stage of the study, statistically significant differences between two groups of students were analysed: those who participated in PS competitions and those who did not have such experience (Table 4).

Table 4 - Comparative analysis of the PC components of philology students depending on participation in PS competitions.

Questionnaires	Indicators of Professional Competence	Average rank		Mann-Whitney U test, P
		Participated in competitions	Did not participate in competitions	
Career Anchors	Professional competence	57.540	47.930	987.000
	Management	55.680	49.030	1058.000
	Autonomy (independence)	54.470	49.750	1103.500
Motivation for Success	Motivation for success	44.250	55.820	940.000; $p=0.050$

Failure Avoidance Motivation	Failure avoidance motivation	47.130	54.200	1050.000
Self-esteem of Mental States Test	Anxiety	55.350	49.230	1070.000
	Frustration	47.390	53.960	1060.000
	Aggressiveness	46.980	54.190	1045.000
	Rigidity	59.040	45.600	869.500; p=0.023
Meaningful Life Orientations	Life goals	49.960	52.430	1157.000
	Life process	56.230	48.800	1037.000
	Life performance	52.370	50.990	1184.000
	Locus of Control - Self	52.080	51.160	1194.000
	Locus of Control - life	46.920	54.240	1042.000
	Overall Score	51.040	51.790	1198.000
Emotional Empathy	Empathy	53.750	50.180	1131.000
	Affective empathy	51.150	51.720	1203.000
Socio-Communicative Competence	Socio-communicative adaptability	54.970	49.460	1085.000
	Striving for agreement	57.260	48.080	997.500
	Tolerance	59.890	46.530	897.500; p=0.027
	Optimism	57.980	47.660	969.500
	Frustration tolerance	53.480	50.340	1141.000
Methodological Culture	Procedural indicator	41.030	33.190	478.000
	Cognitive indicator	40.460	32.710	463.500; p = 0.041

	Axiological indicator	39.810	34.130	495.000
	Performance indicator	38.680	35.270	509.000

Source: Developed by the authors (2025).

In the group of students who did not participate in PS competitions, higher indicators of motivation for success ($U=40.000$; $p=0.050$) and rigidity ($U = 869.500$, $p = 0.023$) were found, compared to those who had experience of participating in competitions. This may indicate that high motivation to achieve a result combined with self-doubt forms unique behaviour in some students – in particular, refusal to participate in activities that involve the risk of failure. At the same time, increased rigidity in this group indicates difficulties in adapting to new educational conditions and unwillingness to change a previously selected strategy of actions, which is a barrier to the development of PS in a modern dynamic environment. In contrast, tolerance indicators were significantly higher ($U=897.500$, $p=0.027$) in the group of students who participated in competitions. This can be explained by the fact that competitive activity involves openness to external criticism, the ability to correctly perceive alternative opinions, the ability to listen and interact, which are signs of developed social and communicative competence. The results of the MC questionnaire showed statistically significant differences between students who participated in PS competitions and those who did not have such experience. In particular, a significant difference was recorded for the cognitive indicator ($U = 463.500$, $p = 0.041$), which indicates a higher level of awareness of the participants of the competitions regarding the theoretical and methodological principles of teaching. The students with experience in competitive activity also demonstrated higher average ranks for procedural, axiological and performance indicators, which proves a more developed MC in general. This can be explained by the active involvement of such students in pedagogical activity, the desire for professional growth and self-development.

So, the results indicate that participation in PS competitions promotes the development of flexibility, openness to feedback, and critical thinking, which are important manifestations of MC. At the same time, the avoidance of such activity is often associated with internal tension, perfectionism, and low tolerance for uncertainty, which hinders the development of PS in future foreign language teachers.

The study found that future foreign language teachers who studied in an innovative environment demonstrated a higher level of professional and pedagogical skills compared to those who studied traditionally. In particular, activity in modelling lessons and using ICT increased, which is consistent with the data of Loureiro et al. (2022) on teachers' digital competencies. In the group with innovative approaches, 55% more respondents achieved a high level of practical mastery of the methods. This confirms the appropriateness of an acmeological approach (Bondar, 2022), which stimulates activity and creativity.

At the same time, we deny the position of Telychko (2022), which reduces only to theoretical training: the results showed that even thorough knowledge does not provide high pedagogical skills without practice. We partially share the opinion of Shakiyeva & Zhorabekova (2023) regarding the effectiveness of distance learning, however, our data show that proper emotional stability and communicative flexibility are not formed without live interaction.

Our survey revealed a high level of motivation and empathy among students: over 70% of respondents considered developing their own empathy key to successful work with students. This is consistent with the findings of Amanbaikyzy and Jakavonytė-Staškuvienė (2023), who established that over 70% of future teachers are able to find a common language even with “closed” students. We agree that emotional sensitivity and the ability to understand non-verbal signals (“knowing body language”) are important personality traits for a teacher. Our results are also consistent with Haroud et al. (2025), who described that the strongest anxiety factor for future teachers is the fear of negative evaluation. We agree with Haroud (2025) that comprehensive preparation should take into account emotional barriers, in particular, gradually involving students in public speaking to reduce anxiety.

The results of the surveys indicated a high level of interpersonal interaction skills: about 65% of students could easily resolve conflicts and “read” non-verbal signals of their classmates. Sharata et al. (2022) showed that thematic online debates effectively develop students’ professional communicative competences. We do not agree with Bondar (2022) that the social component is less significant, as her approach is more focused on individual “personal content”. On the contrary, our data indicate that interactivity and collective communication are key qualities for future teachers. Kravets et al. (2024) emphasize the role of academic writing in the development of teachers’ MC. Our study confirms that the subject Academic Written Communication is effective for developing cognitive and axiological PC components.

Our study found that students in the group with an innovative environment have better methodological skills: for example, 80% of such students showed the ability to independently plan educational research, compared to only 50% in the traditional group. This corresponds to the position of Telychko (2022), who emphasizes the importance of forming an “academic worldview” and MC of future teachers by involving them in empirical research. At the same time, our data partially contradict Shakiyeva et al. (2022). They studied distance education and expressed confidence that the structure of PC is changing there. We found that students perceive methodological training similarly regardless of the format, although the methods of obtaining it may be different. Filiuk (2025) investigates the author’s methodology for teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in medical HEIs. Although we did not study the medical field, we agree with the author that a specialized approach that takes into account the specifics of the professional environment increases the effectiveness of PC development.

5. Conclusions

The study found that students who underwent teaching practice in an innovative educational environment more often assessed their professional level as high (39% versus 12%) and actively used interactive methods. This group also showed a higher interest in academic activity. Statistically significant differences were recorded between the groups in such indicators as empathy, organizational activity, and tolerance ($p < 0.05$), which indicates more developed socio-professional skills in the innovative group. In contrast, increased anxiety and rigidity were noted in the traditional group. Analysis of the MC components revealed higher results in students from the innovative environment, especially for the cognitive component. Experience of participating in competitions also turned out to be a positive factor that contributed to the development of tolerance, optimism, and methodological awareness. Therefore, an innovative educational environment and competitive activity are important conditions for the development of the PC and MC of future foreign language teachers.

These findings highlight that fostering reflective and creative methodological training within practice-based learning environments enhances not only technical proficiency but also emotional resilience and professional adaptability qualities crucial for modern language educators. Theoretically, the study contributes to the understanding of how professional competence and methodological culture interact as dynamic components of pedagogical expertise. Practically, the results support the integration of innovative learning models and competitive formats into teacher education programs to strengthen future educators' professional identity and motivation for continuous growth.

In summary, developing teachers who are both methodologically competent and emotionally intelligent is essential for building an educational culture capable of responding to the challenges of the 21st century.

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