

# Economic courses and an outline of related teaching methods for achieving educational objectives

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## 1. Introduction

The changes occurring in our society are permanently accelerating and deepening. Therefore, the main factor in the further development of the society and economy is the level of education, the quality and performance of the educational system and, above all, the ability to use creative potentials. Modern times and the current more and more complex life of the society place ever greater demands on the knowledge and skills of individuals, which they need to master in order to be able to succeed in it. This trend is also related to the prolonging time required for preparatory education before entering the labour market. Education has thus become an essential part of social and economic life, which can be considered a tool for the development of human personality. At the same time, education is also considered one of the basic human rights, which is an inalienable and universal human value. The issue of using modern teaching methods is currently a very discussed and topical theme. The presented paper deals with modern teaching methods and their use in teaching focused on economic courses. The paper aims to identify and evaluate a modern concept of teaching based on progressive teaching methods

which lead students to an active and independent approach.

## 2. The role of didactics in teaching vocational courses

The starting point of the contribution is didactics in the teaching of courses. The term didactics refers to the theory of education and teaching. General didactics examines the essence, content or general laws of education, but does not focus on the theory of teaching a certain course. This issue is solved by subject didactics, which can be defined as a coordinating and integrating discipline focused on the transformation of professional knowledge into a teaching course. The goal is then to acquire the abilities, knowledge and skills to successfully organize and manage the teaching process in professional subjects. (Ouroda, 2009). Subject didactics solves the problems of individual fields, for example in economics, issues common to all economic courses (didactic techniques, teaching tools, assigning tasks, etc.).

It is necessary to follow didactic principles during teaching, because they have a great influence on teaching as a whole and at the same time allow the application of teaching methods, see e.g. Vališová, Kasíková (2022).

Didactic principles are rules explaining how to teach in order to achieve a set teaching goal with regard to the physical and psychological development of students (Linhartová, 2008). The principles represent general requirements that are in line with the teaching goals and in connection with the basic regularities of the teaching process:

- **The scientific principle** - Enables the use of science as a source of facts, concepts, and patterns that are presented to students. Continuity between professional courses and other courses must be ensured. It is important to work with professional literature, magazines, etc.
  - **The principle of clearness** - It leads to the creation of an image based on sensory knowledge of real objects, processes and phenomena.
  - **The principle of consciousness** - Leads to the student learning with understanding and intention to be aware of the meaning and purpose of the activity. For instance, an economist must know why he needs to learn the basics of accounting.
  - **The principle of continuity** - In professional subjects, it is necessary to distinguish between basic, extended and supplementary subject matter. This principle deals with the relationship of professional knowledge, the selection and organization of the curriculum, its position in the study years and mutual relationships with other courses. Consistency is expressed by thematic plans, where the subject matter is structured into mutually connected knowledge (basic and then expanding).
  - **The principle of adequacy** - Expresses the requirement that the content, scope and difficulty of the curriculum correspond to the mental maturity and basic knowledge of the students. It is advisable to advance from simpler to more complex issues.
  - **The principle of permanence** - The prerequisite for this method is a clear presentation of the subject matter and consistent repetition and practice. The combination of theoretical and practical knowledge well contributes to the consolidation of the subject matter.
  - **The principle of combining theory and practice** - Students should apply the knowledge and skills acquired in professional courses as soon as possible and at an appropriate level into practice. It is therefore appropriate for the school to cooperate with companies, research institutions or other organizations, where students can be able to verify their knowledge and skills in practice.
  - **The principle of feedback** - The teacher must receive feedback that the students understand his explanation, so that the teacher can possibly change the teaching method or return to the misunderstood part of the subject matter.
  - **Principle of comprehensive student development** - Cognitive, attitudinal and psychomotoric components of the student's personality.
- Drahovzal, Kilián, Kohoutek (1997) prepared an overview of didactic principles that relate to basic didactic categories:
- **The aim and tasks of teaching** - the principle of purpose and efficiency;
  - **Teaching content** - the principle of scientific approach, permanence, consistency, adequacy and connection to practice;
  - **Teaching methods** - the principle of clearness, awareness and student activity, a set of didactic methods and resources depending on the tasks and content of the teaching;
  - **Form of teaching organization** - the principle of integration of different forms

of teaching depending on tasks, content and methods of teaching;

- **Conditions for teaching** - creation of necessary conditions for teaching, interest, integration of rational and emotional components;
- **Learning outcomes** - the principle of permanence, effectiveness and feedback.

The work of Drahovrzal, Kilián and Kohoutek (1997) is followed by, for example, Čadílek, Loveček (2005). Their theoretical overview of education and didactics in the teaching of professional subjects can be seen as the basis for further focus on modern teaching methods, see for instance Palát, Palátová (2023) or Pecina, Marinič (2021), who dealt with the quality of teaching professional subjects and research using didactic case studies. Didactic principles follow each other, blend together and complement each other. Didactic rules should be followed by every teacher at any level of education.

### ***3. Teaching methods as an element of the educational system***

The term method is of Greek origin and expresses "the path to something", which can also be understood as a procedure for obtaining knowledge or how to achieve a goal. The teaching method can then be understood as a teaching procedure. From a didactic point of view, Vališová, Kasíková (2022) define it as "a specific way of organizing the activities of the teacher and students, developing the student's educational profile and acting in accordance with educational and pedagogic goals." Maňák, Švec (2003) states that the teaching method represents a certain dynamic element in teaching that compared to the content and organizational forms of teaching, changes and adapts to new goals and circumstances

relatively faster. However, teaching methods are not a decisive factor in teaching, but only one of the elements of the educational system, and therefore cannot replace missing content or compensate for an unclear goal. Those methods are tied to the overall concept of teaching and only within its framework are fully functional and effective." It is a purposeful and well-thought-out procedure that the teacher uses in teaching in order to achieve a set teaching goal. Teaching methods have undergone historical development and have been changing depending on social conditions and the character of the school. While previously the lecture and conversation method dominated, in the last decades further methods have begun to be introduced into teaching, allowing students to actively participate in the teaching. Thus, the demand for the introduction of activating methods in education, where the emphasis is placed on practical experience and direct activity of the student, which is connected with intellectual or manual activity, has increased (Vališová, Kasíková, 2022).

A teacher will only know which teaching method to apply in pedagogical practice when working with his students. However, it is always necessary to make sure that the chosen method leads to the fulfilment of the learning goal and the content of the lectured material, see for instance Čábalová (2011). Achieving the educational goals requires an activity of the student, the teacher should act as a facilitator who, if necessary, intervenes in his activity and thus leads him to become independent (Maňák, Švec, 2003). The main function of teaching methods is the transfer of knowledge and skills, secondary functions include activation, motivation and the ability to communicate. In the teaching of professional courses, it is necessary to choose such teaching methods which help students to learn the application of economic and other laws and their use in practice.

#### ***4. Aspects and classification of teaching methods in pedagogy of the vocational courses***

Different classifications can be found in the pedagogical literature due to the difficulty in classifying teaching methods according to one of its aspects. As a result of this lack of classification, a generally valid classification has not yet been established. The division according to Mojžíšek (1988) is therefore presented, which can be encountered most often in the scientific literature.

##### **A. Didactic aspect - methods in terms of source of knowledge and type of knowledge**

- Verbal methods
- Monologic methods (lecture, interpretation, explanation, briefing);
- Dialogic methods (interview, discussion, dramatization);
- Methods of written works;
- Methods of working with a book, textbook, text.
- Visually demonstrative methods
- Method of observing objects and phenomena;
- Demonstration (images, objects, experiments, activities);
- Static and dynamic projection.
- Practical methods
- Exercise of movement and work skills;
- Laboratory work (experiments and laboratory activities);
- Work activities (in field);
- Creative activities (graphic and creative works).

##### **B. Psychological aspect – methods from the point of view of activity and independence of students**

- Communication methods
- Methods of students' independent work
- Research methods

##### **C. Logical aspect – methods from the point of view of thought operations**

- Comparative procedure
- Inductive procedure
- Deductive procedure
- Analytical-synthetic procedure

##### **D. The procedural aspect – methods from the point of view of stages in the teaching process**

- Motivational methods
- Exposure methods (creation of new knowledge, skills and their acquisition)
- Fixation methods (consolidation of knowledge, repetition of the subject matter)
- Diagnostic and evaluation methods
- Application methods

##### **E. Organizational aspect (application) – methods from the point of view of the theoretical-practical level**

- Combination of methods with teaching forms
- Combination of methods with teaching tools

According to the breakdown based on Maňák and Švec (2003), teaching methods can be divided into three groups:

##### **A. Classic teaching methods**

- **Verbal methods** - explanation, lecture, work with text, interview
- Illustrative-demonstration methods – demonstration and observation, instruction

- Skill-practical methods – laboratory work and experimentation, creating skills

## **B. Activating methods**

- Discussion methods
- Heuristic methods
- Situational methods
- Staging methods
- Didactic games

## **C. Comprehensive teaching methods**

- Frontal teaching
- Group and cooperative teaching
- Partner teaching
- Individual and individualized teaching, independent work of students
- Critical thinking
- Brainstorming
- Project teaching
- Drama teaching
- Open learning
- Learning in life situations
- Computer-supported teaching
- Suggestopedia and superlearning
- Hypnopedia.

Pecina P. and Pecina J. (2012) proposed their own model, who propose to divide teaching methods in combination with organizational forms in terms of student activity into:

- Methods of imparting ready-made knowledge, skills and habits
- Methods and forms of active student work (activating methods, problem-based methods in combination with organizational forms of teaching).

It is possible to observe that in practice the use of the above methods blends together. Therefore, it is always up to the teacher which teaching method he chooses for its implementation. When making a decision, the teacher should take into account the

strengths and weaknesses of these methods, their purpose and should know how to use them in practice (Petty, 2013).

## ***5. Evaluation of factors affecting the selection of teaching methods***

Before the teacher decides to choose and to implement certain teaching methods, he should be able to answer the following questions:

- Will the teaching principles and regularities of the educational process be respected?
- Is the chosen method suitable for the given educational level?
- Will the organizational form of the lesson be held?
- Will the methods used lead to the achievement of immediate goals?

In addition to these aspects, it is necessary to take into account the time consumption of the selected methods. A lesson unit usually takes 45 minutes, and it is impossible to master some teaching methods in such a relatively short time. Therefore, it is often expedient to include two teaching hours in a row during this period. A smooth and beneficial teaching process depends on the correct time planning of the lesson, but also on the spatial possibilities and material equipment of the classroom. The teacher must be familiar with the conditions in the classroom in advance, especially for the teaching of professional subjects. The teacher should not forget the specifics of individual students and their individual needs. Another important factor for the choice of teaching methods is the atmosphere in the classroom, social behaviour of students, motivation to perform and learning results. Last but not least, the pedagogue himself must critically evaluate his theoretical knowledge and skills, experience and knowledge of individual

teaching methods. (Grecmanová, Urbanovská, 2007). Veteška and Tureckiová (2020) develop the issue of competences in education and professional development strategies in detail. Mojžíšek (1988) states that "the highest purpose and mission of the teaching method is to effectively and, if possible, permanently achieve the desired changes in the education of the subject's personality". He adds that it is therefore "about achieving the maximum didactic effectiveness of the method". An appropriate teaching method is one that is:

- **Informatively supportive** - a method that provides full-value, content-free information and skills.
- **Formatively effective** - a method that develops cognitive processes.
- **Rationally and emotionally impressive** - a method that activates the student to experience learning.
- **Educational** - a method that develops the student's moral, social and work profile.
- Natural and applicable in practice.
- **Adequate to students** - a method that takes into account study readiness, personal prerequisites and characteristics, psychological characteristics of students as a whole.
- **Adequate to the teacher** - a method that takes into account his professional and methodical equipment, pedagogical level.
- Didactically economic, financially economic and economic in general.

If the pedagogue is able to fulfil the mentioned parameters, it should not be a problem to successfully apply the selected teaching methods during teaching and, above all, to achieve success with the students, who will take away the maximum possible amount of information or skills from the lesson taught in this way. There is no universal method for any educational institution, therefore the criterion of

suitability is the achieved result. For teaching, the choice of methods is influenced, for example, by the professional orientation of the school, the specificity of the study program, the educational goal, the age and individual characteristics of the students, the time, the equipment and facilities of the school, or classrooms, and the personality of the teacher of specialized subjects. The issues of modern pedagogy are further addressed for instance by Průcha (2017). Kořa, Jedlička and Slavík (2018) develop in detail the issue of pedagogical psychology for teachers.

The supporters of modern methods criticize classic frontal teaching based on the teacher's conveyance of information to students and their continuous testing and motivation for performance based on the threat of a bad grade or assessment. Currently, schools are exposed to a great external and internal transformation that affects a wide range of activities and require a growing level of education. For these reasons, it is important to include activating methods in teaching, which will suitably complement classic teaching methods. Graduates should be able to learn effectively, evaluate achieved results, solve problems independently, express themselves in writing and orally in various situations, cooperate with others, use personality and professional prerequisites for successful involvement in the world of work, etc. For instance, already Skalková (1995) states that "it is therefore important that the teacher also understands and thinks about educational tasks in broader dimensions that go beyond the boundaries of individual taught courses. It is about educating students in such a way so that they are able to cope with the current and future challenges of a changing society and are able to respond adequately to the reality of life and work." In order to improve the quality of education in schools, the support of self-confidence and self-esteem of students is

necessary, which in general, can be described as a hidden curriculum. It is an area of education and training where the school influences students without a pre-given official intention or plan. These are, for example, knowledge gained when communicating in school, opportunities to express one's own thoughts, understanding of a strategy for success or appreciation of ideas. Modern teaching methods can be successfully used in vocational courses at universities and secondary vocational schools, provided that the content of the education and the profile of the school graduate are clearly defined, and enable to incorporate required professional knowledge into the teaching objectives, for which appropriate teaching methods will be selected motivating students to learn.

## 6. Conclusions

Teaching methods have undergone a long development and were changing depending on social conditions and the character of the educational institution. When teaching, it is always necessary to follow didactic principles, which have a great influence on teaching as a whole and at the same time allow the application of teaching methods. It is essential to ensure that the chosen method leads to the fulfilment of the learning objective and the content of the lectured material. In the teaching of professional courses, it is necessary to choose such teaching methods that are enabling that students will learn the application of e.g. economic regularities and their use in practice. The teacher can thoroughly verify the appropriateness of the choice of teaching method when working with his students. In

addition to these aspects, it is necessary to take into account the time consumption of the selected methods. Another important factor for the choice of teaching methods is the very atmosphere among students, social behavior of students, motivation to perform and learning results. It is very important to include activating methods in teaching, which will suitably complement the methods of classic teaching. Graduates should be able to learn effectively, evaluate achieved results, solve problems independently, express themselves in writing and orally in various situations, cooperate with others, use their personality and professional prerequisites for successful involvement in the world of work, etc. It is important to educate students in such a way that they are able to cope with new challenges of a changing society and are able to respond adequately to the reality of personal and professional life. Modern teaching methods can then be successfully used in vocational courses at universities and secondary schools, provided that the content of the education and the profile of the school graduate are clearly defined. After that, it is important to incorporate the required professional knowledge into the learning objectives, for which appropriate teaching methods will be selected that will motivate the students to learn. Last but not least, the pedagogue himself must critically evaluate his theoretical knowledge and skills, his experience and knowledge of individual teaching methods. If the pedagogue is able to fulfil all mentioned criteria, it shouldn't be a problem to successfully implement chosen teaching methods and, above all, to achieve success with students who will take away the maximum possible amount of information or skills from the teaching designed in this way.

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### ABSTRACT

*The presented paper deals with modern teaching methods and their use in teaching focused on economic courses. The issue of using modern teaching methods is currently a very discussed and topical theme. It is necessary to follow didactic principles, which have a great influence on teaching as a whole and at the same time allow the application of teaching methods. It is essential to ensure that the chosen method leads to the fulfilment of the learning objective and the content of the lectured material. In the teaching of professional courses, it is necessary to choose such teaching methods that are enabling that students will learn the application of e.g. economic regularities and their use in practice. Modern teaching methods can be successfully used in vocational courses at universities and secondary schools, provided that the content of the education and the profile of the school graduate are clearly defined. It is important to incorporate the required professional knowledge into the learning objectives, for which appropriate teaching methods will be selected that will motivate the students to learn. The paper aims to identify and evaluate a modern concept of teaching based on progressive teaching methods which lead students to an active and independent approach.*

### KEYWORDS

*economics; education; teaching; methods; classification*

### JEL CLASSIFICATION

A10, A20, A23