COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION: SHAPING SKILLS AND TRANSFORMING LEARNING

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Abstract: This article provides a comprehensive overview of Competency-Based Education (CBE) by exploring its historical roots, classifications, and distinct characteristics. We introduce two additional competencies, emphasizing the importance of general competencies alongside subject-specific knowledge and the evaluative nature of competencies. Tracing the evolution of CBE from its initiation in Europe in the 1980s to widespread adoption, particularly in Austria in the 1990s, the study acknowledges its significance in evaluating professional competence. We discuss the associated terminology, such as performance-based learning and capabilities-driven instructions. Insights from scholars highlight the practical application of knowledge and the unique feature of CBE, demanding mastery of acquired skills.

Introduction

If we analyze the transition to competency-based education, it is aimed at shaping vital skills and applying them in situations where the acquired knowledge and developed language competence are used. This approach is mainly designed for older language learners, and they need to understand the practical application of the skills they are acquiring. Scientific literature indicates that this approach was initially developed in the United States during a certain period to teach English to immigrants for the purpose of enhancing their life experiences. Its foundation aligns with the key principles of American psychology, particularly behaviorism.[9]

Methods:

In the absence of specific research methods, this section draws on insights from scholars such as Bowden, Benjamin Blum, and Grant to present the historical development and popularization of CBE. It introduces the educational characteristics based on competency. According to Bowden, this approach, which gained popularity in the United States until the 1950s[3], was also applied by scholars such as Benjamin Blum. In 1979, Grant and others described this approach as a form of education based

on the analysis of criteria necessary for acquiring skills in contemporary society. They proposed educational programs and teaching methods based on these criteria. From this definition, we can understand that competency is a broad concept that can be diverse in terms of content, knowledge, and skills. Another group of competencies, labeled by Kouvenhoun as "general," is considered necessary for all representatives in a field to develop essential and new professional qualities. This is why the educational characteristics based on competency-based education are explained as follows:

a) The focus on acquiring professional qualities;

b) The prioritization of individualized education;

c) Its foundation on constructivism theory (applied in the 19th century in the United States by Colonel Francis Parker and in the 20th century by Russian sociologist L. Vygotsky, Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget, and American philosopher and educator Dewey, who implemented the individualized teaching method in the form of constructivism).

d) Its reliance on the teacher's role as a cognitive guide [98] to perform the task of organizing the lesson not in the main classroom but as a person guiding and directing students in the instruction process, monitoring their activities, and serving as a facilitator who guides students on the right path in education based on student-oriented guidance.

Results:

The educational characteristics include: "The classification of education based on competency mentioned above led us to consider adding the following two competencies as reasonable:

a) Emphasis not only on specific subject knowledge but also on the development of general competencies related to a profession;

b) Being evaluative and checking competencies.

In most cases, lessons have been conducted based on this approach in vocational and professional training institutions since the 1980s in Europe and the 1990s in Austria, where competency was accepted as the basis for evaluating professional competence. Competency-based education, during its development, has been named with various terms such as performance-based learning, learning based on criteria, and instruction focused on capabilities.

According to Smith and Peterson, competency-based education is about applying knowledge practically rather than just acquiring knowledge. According to B. Khodjaev, 'In connection with this requirement, the system of choosing teaching

methods undergoes changes. Choosing teaching methods and using them in practice requires adapting competencies and functions according to the requirements placed in the educational process.[11]

Competency-based education requires not only the individual acquisition and development of knowledge and skills but also their mastery. According to B. Khodjaev, '... in connection with this requirement, the system of choosing teaching methods undergoes changes. Choosing teaching methods and using them in practice requires adapting competencies and functions according to the requirements placed in the educational process.'

According to the scholar Q. A. Niyozov, in competency-based education, students who have received education are expected to demonstrate independent thinking, express their position in specific situations, develop leadership abilities, use information technology resources, and demonstrate initiative based on their general knowledge.[12]

Discussion:

This section delves into the widespread adoption of CBE, notably in Europe since the 1980s and Austria in the 1990s, where it serves as the cornerstone for evaluating professional competence. Emphasizing the adaptability of teaching methods within CBE, it underscores the shift from traditional classroom-centric approaches to a dynamic system where educators serve as cognitive guides. The importance of practical mastery of knowledge and skills is highlighted, aligning with the overarching goal of competency-based education. The discussion further explores the proposed additional competencies, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach that encompasses both specific subject knowledge and broader professional qualities. Additionally, it analyzes the implications of CBE on individualized education, constructivism theory, and the evolving role of educators as facilitators in student-oriented guidance. [2] Overall, the discussion accentuates the transformative nature of CBE in shaping modern pedagogy and emphasizes the continuous need for competency expansion in the education sector.Here, the uniqueness of competency-based education lies in the priority and requirements of language learners. The requirement of competency includes selecting grammar and vocabulary that is relevant to the learner's context. This approach mainly involves authentic materials and practical exercises, and translation is used only as a means of communication. Competency-based education, like communicative education, includes activities performed outside the classroom in a foreign language, such as interviewing tourists

in a foreign language, writing daily electronic journals (blogs) about their travels, or participating in online discussions on educational platforms in a foreign language. Problem-solving skills and communicative activities are considered essential tools in competency-based and communicative education, which are carried out outside the classroom in the learning process. According to Q. A. Niyozov's opinion, competency-based education leads to the development of independent thinking, the demonstration of one's position in specific situations, the formation of leadership skills, the use of information technology resources, and the cultivation of socio-cultural competencies in students.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the term 'competency' requires continuous expansion according to N. A. Muslimov's definition, emphasizing that competency is not only the possession of knowledge and skills by a specialist but also the integration of knowledge and actions in each independent direction. Therefore, the continuous expansion of competency includes constant improvement of professional knowledge, learning new information, understanding important social requirements, searching for new information, reprocessing it, and applying it in one's activities

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