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# MODERN TEACHING METHODS IN VOCATIONAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION: THE PROBLEM OF FUNCTIONAL SYSTEMATIZATION

**Abstract**. The article examines the problem of the functional systematization of modern teaching methods in vocational and higher education. It is established that existing classifications are based on different criteria, including the level of learner activity, the nature of cognitive activity, the technological basis, and forms of instructional organization, which complicates the differentiation between teaching methods, educational technologies, digital tools, and organizational forms of learning. An original functional systematization of modern teaching methods is proposed on the basis of the dominant mechanism of learner activity. Four groups are distinguished: problem-analytical, simulation-and-activity-based, project-and-product-oriented, and interactive-communicative methods. Their functional characteristics and the specific features of their implementation in vocational and higher education are substantiated. Digitalization is conceptualized as a cross-cutting factor that modifies the didactic potential of teaching methods, while digital technologies are regarded as tools for their implementation rather than as a separate classification group. A comparative matrix for the implementation of modern teaching methods is developed according to the dominant learning activity, the nature of professionally oriented tasks, the level of learner autonomy, digital support, and the expected learning outcome. It is established that the specific implementation of teaching methods in vocational and higher education is determined by the nature and complexity of professionally oriented tasks, the level of learner autonomy, and the expected outcomes of learner activity. It is demonstrated that functional systematization enables the organization of modern methodological tools on a unified didactic basis and provides a foundation for the evidence-based selection of teaching methods in accordance with learning objectives, content, and expected learning outcomes.

**Keywords**: teaching methods; functional systematization; vocational education; higher education; dominant mechanism of learner activity; problem-analytical methods; simulation-and-activity-based methods; project-and-product-oriented methods; interactive-communicative methods; digitalization.

# СУЧАСНІ МЕТОДИ НАВЧАННЯ В ПРОФЕСІЙНІЙ І ВИЩІЙ ОСВІТІ: ПРОБЛЕМА ФУНКЦІОНАЛЬНОЇ СИСТЕМАТИЗАЦІЇ

**Анотація**. У статті досліджено проблему функціональної систематизації сучасних методів навчання в професійній та вищій освіті. Встановлено, що наявні класифікації ґрунтуються на різних критеріях – рівні активності здобувачів, характері пізнавальної діяльності, технологічній основі, формах організації навчання, що ускладнює розмежування методів, освітніх технологій, цифрових засобів і форм організації навчання. Розроблено авторську функціональну систематизацію сучасних методів за домінантним механізмом діяльності здобувача освіти з виокремленням чотирьох груп: проблемно-аналітичних, імітаційно-діяльнісних, проєктно-продуктивних і інтерактивно-комунікативних. Обґрунтовано їх функціональні характеристики та специфіку реалізації у професійній і вищій освіті. Цифровізацію визначено як наскрізний чинник модифікації дидактичних можливостей методів, а цифрові технології – як засоби їх реалізації, що не утворюють самостійної класифікаційної групи. Сформовано порівняльну матрицю реалізації сучасних методів навчання за домінантною навчальною дією, характером професійно орієнтованого завдання, рівнем самостійності здобувача, цифровою підтримкою та очікуваним освітнім результатом. Встановлено, що специфіка реалізації методів у професійній та вищій освіті визначається характером і складністю професійно орієнтованих завдань, рівнем автономності здобувача та очікуваними результатами його діяльності. Доведено, що функціональна

систематизація забезпечує впорядкування сучасного методичного інструментарію за єдиною дидактичною основою та створює підґрунтя для обґрунтованого добору методів відповідно до цілей, змісту й очікуваних результатів навчання.

**Ключові слова**: методи навчання; функціональна систематизація; професійна освіта; вища освіта; домінантний механізм діяльності; проблемно-аналітичні методи; імітаційно-діяльнісні методи; проєктно-продуктивні методи; інтерактивно-комунікативні методи; цифровізація.

## INTRODUCTION

**The problem formulation.** The current stage of development of vocational and higher education is characterized by a substantial renewal of the instructional repertoire under the influence of digitalization, competency-based and student-centered educational paradigms, changes in the labour market, the proliferation of artificial intelligence technologies, and increasing demands for the professional mobility of specialists. Accordingly, greater importance is being attached to teaching methods that engage learners in active learning, the solution of professionally oriented problems, the modelling of real-life situations, the creation of educational and professional products, collaborative interaction, reflection, and independent decision-making.

At the same time, the expanding range of such methods raises the issue of their systematic scholarly organization. In pedagogical theory and practice, alongside problem-based, research-oriented, project-based, simulation-based, and interactive methods, concepts such as blended and flipped learning, gamification, microlearning, digital platforms, simulators, VR/AR technologies, and artificial intelligence tools are increasingly used. However, these phenomena differ in their didactic nature: some characterize ways of organizing learning activities, whereas others represent educational technologies, models, strategies, or digital tools used to support their implementation. The lack of clear differentiation among these categories complicates the systematization of modern teaching methods and their theoretically grounded selection in accordance with the aims and intended learning outcomes of professional education and training.

This issue is particularly significant in vocational and higher education, where methods bearing the same name may be implemented through different types of learner activity and lead to different learning outcomes. In vocational education, the instructional repertoire is more strongly oriented towards the performance of professional actions, the modelling of workplace processes, and the solution of practice-oriented tasks, whereas in higher education greater emphasis is placed on analytical, research-oriented, project-based, and reflective components of learning. At the same time, digital technologies are becoming increasingly integrated into all types of learning activity; however, their use in itself does not provide sufficient grounds for distinguishing a separate category of teaching methods.

Thus, a contradiction emerges between the expansion and differentiation of the contemporary instructional repertoire in vocational and higher education and the insufficiently defined common didactic basis for its systematization. The use of different classification criteria complicates the comparison of teaching methods, the identification of their functional specificity, and their differentiation from educational technologies, organizational forms of learning, and digital tools. This necessitates the functional systematization of modern teaching methods according to the dominant mechanism of learner activity as the key classification criterion and the learning outcome associated with that mechanism.

**Analysis of recent research and publications**. The issue of updating and systematizing teaching methods in vocational and higher education has received considerable attention in contemporary pedagogical research. The didactic potential of modern teaching methods and technologies in vocational and higher education has been explored in the works of O. Karpenko, L. Prokopiv, V. Stynska, O. Shamraliuk, and others. These studies substantiate the effectiveness of the case method, problem-based and inquiry-oriented, game-based, project-based, and interactive methods, as well as training technologies aimed at enhancing students' cognitive and practical engagement, professional interaction, and reflection (Stynska, Prokopiv, 2020; Stynska, Karpenko, 2021; Shamraliuk, 2023; Stynska, Basarab, Paska, 2025).

The classification of innovative teaching methods is specifically addressed by A. Boiarska-Khomenko and T. Sobchenko, who systematize them according to the level of student activity, the nature of cognitive activity, their technological basis, and the form of learning organization (Boiarska-Khomenko, Sobchenko, 2025). This multiplicity of criteria reflects the diversity of scholarly approaches; at the same time, it highlights the need to identify a unified didactic basis for the systematization of teaching methods.

International research also confirms the transformation of the methodological repertoire of vocational and higher education. In vocational education, there is a growing emphasis on active, problem-oriented, project-based, collaborative, and digitally supported learning (Noguera Fructuoso et al., 2024), whereas higher education is increasingly characterized by the adoption of student-centred and technology-enhanced pedagogical practices (Suyo-Vega et al., 2024). At the same time, digital transformation encompasses not only technological provision but also organizational and pedagogical changes, which necessitates a clear distinction between teaching methods themselves and the digital tools used to implement them (Castro Benavides et al., 2020).

Thus, existing studies represent diverse approaches to the classification of teaching methods; however, the multiplicity of criteria complicates their coherent functional systematization. The systematization of teaching methods according to a unified didactic basis – the dominant mechanism of student activity – remains insufficiently developed. Such an approach makes it possible to identify their functional specificity and to compare the particularities of their implementation in vocational and higher education.

## AIM AND TASKS OF THE RESEARCH

The aim of the study is to theoretically substantiate and carry out a functional systematization of contemporary teaching methods in vocational and higher education according to the dominant mechanism of learner activity, to

identify their functional specificity, and to determine the particularities of their implementation in different educational contexts.

Achieving this aim involves the following objectives: to clarify the essence and defining characteristics of contemporary teaching methods; to substantiate the criterion for their functional systematization and distinguish the corresponding groups of methods; to identify the particularities of implementing these groups in vocational and higher education; to reveal the role of digital technologies as a cross-cutting factor modifying the didactic potential of teaching methods; and to develop a comparative matrix of their implementation in vocational and higher education.

The scientific novelty of the study lies in the development of an original functional systematization of contemporary teaching methods according to the dominant mechanism of learner activity, distinguishing four groups: problem-analytical, simulation-activity-based, project-productive, and interactive-communicative; the substantiation of digitalization as a cross-cutting factor modifying the didactic potential of teaching methods rather than as an independent classification group; and the development of a comparative matrix of their implementation in vocational and higher education according to the dominant learning action, the nature of the professionally oriented task, the level of learner autonomy, digital support, and the expected educational outcome.

**RESEARCH METHODS**

The study employed a set of interrelated theoretical methods: analysis and synthesis – to examine scholarly approaches to the essence, classification, and application of contemporary teaching methods; comparative analysis – to identify common and distinctive features of their implementation in vocational and higher education; systematization and classification – to organize teaching methods according to the dominant mechanism of learner activity; structural-functional analysis – to establish the relationship between the dominant learning action, the mode of organizing learning activity, and the expected educational outcome; theoretical generalization – to formulate conclusions regarding the functional specificity of contemporary teaching methods and the role of digital technologies in their implementation.

**RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH**

Our research has shown that contemporary educational transformations are changing not so much the nature of the teaching method itself as its functional role in the educational process. A teaching method is increasingly understood not as a means of transmitting educational information, but as a way of organizing learners' active cognitive, communicative, project-based, and professional-practical activities.

In this context, contemporary teaching methods are interpreted as ways of organizing pedagogical interaction and learners' independent activity aimed at the active acquisition and application of knowledge, solving professionally oriented problems, creating educational and professional products, developing communication and reflection, and fostering the capacity for self-directed learning (Doolittle et al., 2023; OECD, 2019). Their defining characteristics include learner agency, the activity-based nature of learning, professional contextualization, problem orientation, interactivity, practice orientation, variability in approaches to task solving, reflexivity, the possibility of digital support, and a focus on educational outcomes.

Existing classifications of contemporary and innovative teaching methods are based on different criteria, which makes it possible to reveal particular aspects of their application but at the same time complicates their comparison and the clear differentiation among teaching methods, educational technologies, digital tools, and forms of learning organization. In particular, A. Boiarska-Khomenko and T. Sobchenko systematize innovative methods according to the level of learner activity, the nature of cognitive activity, the technological basis, and the form of learning organization (Boiarska-Khomenko, Sobchenko, 2025).

Against this background, the functional systematization of contemporary teaching methods is carried out according to the dominant mechanism of learner activity, understood as the principal mode of learning activity that determines the logic of method application and the expected educational outcome. According to this criterion, four groups of methods are distinguished: problem-analytical, simulation-activity-based, project-productive, and interactive-communicative.

**1. Problem-analytical methods**. This group includes the case method, problem-search method, partial-search (heuristic) method, method of professional situation analysis, critical incident analysis method, problem-solving method, and other methods in which the dominant activity involves problem analysis, identification of cause-and-effect relationships, generation of alternatives, and selection of a substantiated solution.

The case method involves the analysis of a specific situation requiring the application of theoretical knowledge in order to make a practically significant decision. Its value lies in its professional contextualization: the learner does not reproduce a predetermined answer but compares facts, identifies the problem, evaluates possible alternatives, and substantiates their own position (Stynska, Prokopiv, 2020).

In vocational education, a case should be designed around a specific workplace situation, such as a technological error, equipment malfunction, violation of a work procedure, or the need to select the optimal way of performing an operation. Accordingly, the learning outcome is the ability to make a professionally appropriate decision and implement it in a practical context.

In higher education, the case assumes a more complex problem-analytical character and may involve the integration of knowledge from several disciplines, engagement with alternative perspectives, analysis of scholarly and professional contradictions, argumentation, and prediction of the consequences of a decision.

The problem-search method involves posing a problem task that requires learners to independently search for a way to solve it by formulating the problem, proposing assumptions, selecting and analyzing the necessary information, and substantiating the adopted decision (Stynska, Prokopiv, 2020).

In vocational education, its implementation is primarily associated with solving specific workplace, technological, or practical problems that require the selection of an appropriate mode of professional action.

In higher education, problem-search activity acquires a more analytical and research-oriented character and involves problem formulation, the generation and verification of assumptions, critical analysis of information, comparison of alternative approaches, and substantiation of conclusions. Thus, in both educational contexts, the method is based on the independent search for a way to solve a problem, although it differs in the nature and complexity of the problem task and in the degree of learner autonomy.

The method of professional situation analysis involves examining a real or simulated professional situation, identifying the problem, analyzing its causes and conditions, comparing possible courses of action, and substantiating the optimal solution.

In vocational education, it is primarily focused on the analysis of specific workplace and technological situations, whereas in higher education it addresses complex professional problems requiring the integration of theoretical knowledge, critical analysis, and a reasoned choice of a course of action (Stynska, Prokopiv, 2020).

The critical incident analysis method is based on examining significant cases of professional practice that require clarification of their causes, evaluation of participants' actions, analysis of consequences, and identification of possible alternative responses. The Critical Incident Technique was originally developed by J. Flanagan (Flanagan, 1954) as a procedure for the systematic analysis of significant manifestations of professional behavior; subsequently, critical incident analysis also came to be used in vocational training and pedagogical reflection.

In vocational education, the method is primarily oriented toward the analysis of specific workplace or practical situations, identification of the causes of ineffective or effective actions, and development of an optimal algorithm of professional behavior.

In higher education, critical incident analysis acquires a more reflective and analytical character and is used to interpret complex professional situations, compare alternative solutions, integrate theoretical knowledge with practical experience, and develop critical thinking (Anselmann, 2023).

Thus, within the problem-analytical group, the learning process progresses from an educational problem to a professionally substantiated decision.

**2. Simulation-activity-based methods**. This group includes the method of professional situation modelling, business game, role-playing game, simulation method, training, and method of practical performance of professional actions. These methods are united by the dominant mechanism of reproducing or modelling professional activity, performing relevant actions under simulated conditions, analysing the results obtained, and adjusting modes of activity.

Training is characterized by an activity-based orientation, group interaction, practical focus, and reflexivity (Shamraliuk, 2023). It facilitates not only the acquisition of modes of professional activity but also their practical application, the receipt of feedback, the analysis of difficulties, and the adjustment of one's own actions (Stynska, Karpenko, 2021).

In vocational education, training-based learning is primarily aimed at practising professional operations, action algorithms, and ways of responding to non-standard workplace situations and may have a production-practical, technical-technological, communicative, or entrepreneurial orientation (Shamraliuk, 2023; Stynska, Basarab, Paska, 2025).

In higher education, training is more strongly oriented towards the development of professional communication, teamwork, leadership and management skills, professional mastery, and reflection (Stynska, Karpenko, 2021).

The simulation-activity-based group also includes business games and role-playing game, whose didactic mechanism involves modelling professional roles, situations, and interactions. In vocational education, they primarily reproduce workplace situations, the distribution of professional functions, and modes of interaction in the work environment; in higher education, they may simulate pedagogical, managerial, project-based, expert, and other types of professional activity that require decision-making and coordination of participants' actions (Stynska, Prokopiv, 2020).

An important place within this group is occupied by the method of professional situation modelling, which involves reproducing the essential characteristics of real professional activity in order to test different modes of action and evaluate their effectiveness. In vocational education, modelling is primarily aimed at practising specific technological operations and workplace scenarios, whereas in higher education it focuses on the analysis of complex professional situations, consideration of alternative decision-making options, and prediction of their consequences.

The didactic potential of simulation-activity-based methods is considerably enhanced through digital simulators, virtual training environments, VR/AR environments, and digital models of professional processes, which make it possible to practise actions repeatedly, analyse errors, and adjust professional behaviour within a controlled and safe educational environment (Stynska, Basarab, Paska, 2025).

**3. Project-productive methods**. The dominant mechanism of this group is the design, creation, and presentation of a completed educational or professionally oriented product. This group includes the project method, construction (design) method, method of creative productive tasks, as well as the research method in cases where its outcome is a completed research product. Such products may include a model, technological solution, algorithm, methodological development, analytical report, digital resource, prototype, and others.

The project method combines learner autonomy, planning, practical activity, responsibility for the outcome, and its presentation. Projects may be research-oriented, practical, informational, creative, or prognostic in nature (Stynska, Prokopiv, 2020). In vocational education, project activity is primarily aimed at creating a specific professional or technological product, such as a model, an algorithm for performing a task, a technological solution, a digital

resource, or a project for organizing a production process. In doing so, the learner completes the full cycle of activity: from task formulation and planning to implementation, quality control, and presentation of the outcome. In higher education, project activity acquires greater analytical and research complexity and may culminate in the development of research projects, methodological materials, analytical reports, educational models, strategies, digital products, or start-up projects.

The construction (design) method involves developing a structure, model, technology, or mode of activity in accordance with specified requirements and criteria. In vocational education, it is primarily oriented towards designing a material, technological, or production object or process, whereas in higher education it may encompass the design of educational, managerial, research, digital, or organizational models.

The method of creative productive tasks is aimed at the independent creation of a new or modified product on the basis of acquired knowledge and experience. Its implementation involves variability of solutions, independent choice of modes of activity, and substantiation of the resulting product.

Project-productive methods may be combined with elements of design thinking, interdisciplinary project work, and activities in creative laboratories, thereby extending their potential from the performance of a prescribed task to the generation, development, testing, and presentation of a new professional or educational product (Boiarska-Khomenko, Sobchenko, 2025).

**4. Interactive-communicative methods**. The dominant mechanism of this group is the construction of knowledge, the formation of a professional position, and joint decision-making in the process of interpersonal and group interaction. This group includes the discussion method, debates, brainstorming method, cooperative learning method, peer learning, and other methods involving the active exchange of ideas, argumentation, coordination of positions, and collaborative solution of educational and professional tasks.

The implementation of interactive-communicative methods may be supported by such techniques as Circle of Ideas, Fishbowl, and Take a Position, as well as by pair and small-group work. Circle of Ideas facilitates the sequential presentation and comparison of different approaches to solving a problem; Fishbowl promotes observation, analysis, and evaluation of group interaction; Take a Position develops the ability to substantiate and defend one's own position. Small-group work ensures the distribution of functions, coordination of joint actions, and responsibility for the collective outcome (Stynska, Prokopiv, 2020).

The discussion method is based on the reasoned exchange of positions on a problematic issue and is aimed at developing critical thinking, professional discourse, the ability to substantiate one's own judgments, and the capacity to evaluate alternative viewpoints. In vocational education, discussion is primarily associated with the consideration of workplace situations, ways of performing professional tasks, standards, and alternative modes of professional behaviour; in higher education, it may address complex theoretical, professional, research, and interdisciplinary issues and involve a higher degree of learner autonomy and argumentation.

Debates, as an interactive-communicative method, involve the structured comparison of alternative positions on a problematic issue, their reasoned defence, critical evaluation of opponents' evidence, and formulation of substantiated conclusions. The method contributes to the development of critical thinking, argumentation, communication skills, and the ability to evaluate alternative viewpoints (Andreucci-Annunziata et al., 2023; Gu et al., 2022). In vocational education, debates are particularly appropriate for discussing approaches to performing professional tasks, workplace decisions, and practical problem situations, whereas in higher education they may be aimed at examining complex professional, scientific, ethical, and interdisciplinary issues.

Interactive-communicative methods acquire particular significance in view of the growing role of professional interaction, collaboration, and cooperation in the contemporary professional environment. In vocational education, they are primarily aimed at developing professional communication skills, coordination of actions, and interaction in the workplace environment; in higher education, they focus on the development of reasoned professional discussion, expert and interdisciplinary interaction, collective decision-making, and collaborative design.

The further transformation of the methodological repertoire of vocational and higher education is largely associated with the digitalization of the educational environment, which expands the ways in which teaching methods can be implemented without altering their didactic nature. In this regard, it is methodologically important to distinguish teaching methods themselves from the digital tools used for their implementation. Moodle, Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, digital whiteboards, VR/AR technologies, simulators, and artificial intelligence systems are tools and environments that provide new opportunities for organizing learners' cognitive and professionally oriented activities. This approach is consistent with studies in which the digital support of professional training is associated with modelling real-world conditions of professional activity, providing access to up-to-date resources, increasing interactivity, and creating a safe environment for practising professional actions (Boiarska-Khomenko, Sobchenko, 2025).

At the same time, a digital tool acquires didactic significance only within the structure of a particular mode of learning activity – problem analysis, modelling of professional action, product creation, or interaction. Therefore, digitalization is considered not as an independent classification group of methods, but as a cross-cutting modifier of their functional potential. Within the problem-analytical group, digital tools support information search and analysis, work with digital cases, and substantiation of decisions; within the simulation-activity-based group, they support the modelling of professional processes and the practising of professional actions; within the project-productive group, they facilitate the design, creation, and presentation of educational and professional products; and within the

interactive-communicative group, they enable synchronous and asynchronous interaction, cooperative activity, and timely feedback.

On this basis, we propose a comparative matrix for the implementation of contemporary teaching methods in vocational and higher education. On this basis, we propose a comparative matrix for the implementation of contemporary teaching methods in vocational and higher education (Table 1).

***Table 1***

***Comparative Matrix for the Implementation of Contemporary Teaching Methods in Vocational and Higher Education***

| Group of methods | Dominant learning action | Vocational education | Higher education | Level of learner autonomy | Digital support | Key outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Problem-analytical** | analysis – search for alternatives – substantiation of a decision | solving workplace, technological, and practical problems | analysis of complex professional, scientific, and research problems | medium – high: from analysing a given problem to independently searching for and substantiating a solution | digital cases, databases, information and analytical resources, AI tools | critical and analytical thinking; ability to make substantiated decisions |
| **Simulation-activity-based** | modelling – performance – analysis – adjustment of actions | practising professional operations, action algorithms, and workplace scenarios | modelling complex professional roles, situations, and interactions | medium – high: performing, analysing, and adjusting actions in a simulated professional context | digital simulators, virtual training environments, VR/AR environments, digital models | readiness to perform professional actions in changing situations |
| **Project-productive** | design – creation – testing – presentation of a product | creation of a professional, technological, or digital product | creation of a research, analytical, educational, digital, or innovative product | high: independent or collaborative planning, implementation, and evaluation of outcomes | digital design environments, collaborative work services, tools for creating and presenting products | project competence, autonomy, ability to create a completed product |
| **Interactive-communicative** | interaction – argumentation – coordination of positions | professional communication, cooperation, and coordination of actions in the workplace environment | discussion-based, expert, professional, and interdisciplinary interaction | medium – high: autonomy of one's position in the process of collaborative activity and decision-making | platforms for synchronous and asynchronous interaction, digital whiteboards, collaborative work services | communicative competence, argumentation skills, ability to engage in professional interaction |

The proposed matrix demonstrates that the functional specificity of contemporary teaching methods is determined primarily by the dominant mechanism of learner activity, whereas the particularities of their implementation depend on the nature and complexity of the professionally oriented task, the level of learner autonomy, the mode of digital support, and the expected educational outcome. This makes it possible to compare methods not by their formal designation or technological provision, but by the dominant type of activity they organize.

In vocational education, the functional implementation of teaching methods is more closely associated with practice orientation, the performance of professional actions, the practising of algorithms, and the modelling of workplace processes. In higher education, analytical, research, project-based, and reflective components become more pronounced. At the same time, these differences are not absolute: vocational education is increasingly integrating problem-based, research, and project tasks, whereas higher education is strengthening its practical orientation and the connection between learning and real professional situations.

Thus, functional systematization makes it possible to view contemporary teaching methods not as an isolated set of pedagogical innovations, but as interrelated ways of organizing different types of learner activity. The selection and combination of methods should be determined by the aim, content, nature of the professional task, expected learning outcomes, and the level of learner autonomy. This is consistent with the principle of the expedient integration of traditional and innovative methods in accordance with the aim, content, and specific characteristics of educational activity (Stynska, Prokopiv, 2020).

Therefore, the defining characteristic of contemporary teaching methods is not their formal novelty, but their functional correspondence to the nature of learner activity and the expected educational outcome. Such correspondence is manifested in the activation and increasing autonomy of learning activity, the professional contextualization of content,

the integration of knowledge and modes of activity, the development of interaction and reflection, the purposeful use of digital tools, and the transfer of acquired educational experience into professional practice.

**CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS OF FURTHER RESEARCH**

The study has demonstrated the relevance of the problem of functional systematization of contemporary teaching methods in vocational and higher education. The expediency of organizing these methods according to the dominant mechanism of learner activity has been substantiated, making it possible to differentiate them by the nature of the dominant learning action and the expected outcome. On this basis, four functional groups have been distinguished: problem-analytical, simulation-activity-based, project-productive, and interactive-communicative methods.

It has been established that the commonality of the functional mechanism does not eliminate the specific features of method implementation in different educational contexts: vocational education is predominantly oriented towards the practical performance of professional actions and the solution of workplace tasks, whereas higher education is characterized by increasing problem complexity, a higher level of analytical engagement, a stronger research orientation, and greater learner autonomy. Digitalization has been substantiated as a cross-cutting modifier of the functional potential of teaching methods, while digital technologies are regarded as means of their implementation that do not constitute an independent classification group.

The developed comparative matrix makes it possible to correlate each group of methods with the dominant learning action, the nature of the professionally oriented task, the level of learner autonomy, digital support, and the key educational outcome.

Prospects for further research are associated with the empirical validation of the proposed functional systematization, refinement of the criteria for assigning individual methods to the identified groups, and substantiation of the pedagogical conditions for their effective combination in vocational and higher education.

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