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## SIGNIFICANCE OF A TEACHER'S INNOVATIVE POTENTIAL IN THE MODERN PARADIGM OF THE DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

### SIGNIFICADO DEL POTENCIAL INNOVADOR DEL DOCENTE EN EL PARADIGMA MODERNO DEL DESARROLLO DE LA EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR

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#### ABSTRACT

The recent decades have been marked by an active transition from purely traditional forms of learning in higher education institutions to innovative methods that allow one to obtain more efficient results and increase students' motivation for learning. The implementation of innovative processes in the Russian education system is fostering a swift transition of the pedagogical sphere to a new level. The study of the significance of the teacher's innovative potential in the modern paradigm of innovative development in higher education has been conducted in the Moscow Aviation Institute (National Research University) at the Department of Foreign Languages. The sample consisted of 39 teachers of foreign languages. As a result of the study, the following topics have been investigated: what teachers understand by innovations in education, the attitude towards innovations in the institute and the work with the learning management system during the pandemic and the self-isolation period. The author has described the innovative tools that teachers use in their pedagogic activity and evaluated the qualities that form teachers' innovative potential. The study has helped to identify the key areas for developing the innovative potential of the teachers at the institute.

#### Keywords:

Teacher's innovative potential, innovations in education, pedagogical innovation studies, innovative thinking, teaching methods.

#### RESUMEN

Las últimas décadas han estado marcadas por una transición activa desde formas de aprendizaje puramente tradicionales en las instituciones de educación superior hacia métodos innovadores que permiten obtener resultados más eficientes y aumentar la motivación de los estudiantes por aprender. La implementación de procesos innovadores en el sistema educativo ruso está fomentando una transición rápida de la esfera pedagógica a un nuevo nivel. El estudio de la importancia del potencial innovador del docente en el paradigma moderno del desarrollo innovador en la educación superior se llevó a cabo en el Instituto de Aviación de Moscú (Universidad Nacional de Investigación) en el Departamento de Idiomas Extranjeros. La muestra estuvo compuesta por 39 profesores de lenguas extranjeras. Como resultado del estudio se han investigado los siguientes temas: qué entienden los docentes por innovaciones en educación, la actitud frente a las innovaciones en el instituto y el trabajo con el sistema de gestión del aprendizaje durante la pandemia y el período de autoaislamiento. El autor ha descrito las herramientas innovadoras que utilizan los docentes en su actividad pedagógica y ha evaluado las cualidades que forman el potencial innovador de los docentes. El estudio ha ayudado a identificar las áreas clave para desarrollar el potencial innovador de los docentes del instituto.

#### Palabras clave:

Potencial innovador del docente, innovaciones en educación, estudios de innovación pedagógica, pensamiento innovador, métodos de enseñanza

## INTRODUCTION

For its successful implementation, the national program “Digital Economy” in Russia requires an increased research potential and the creation of a framework of professionals who can quickly achieve the set goals. Researchers and teachers at technical universities possess academic knowledge and generate new ideas that give rise to new developments and promote the development of the Russian economy (Ponyaeva, 2020). The relevance of the study stems from the fact that innovative processes have been implemented in the Russian education system which promotes a swift transition of the pedagogical sphere to a new level. The novelties that refer to new stable educational elements are targeted changes that foster a steady evolution of Russian educational institutions. This transformation is impossible without solving numerous difficulties in education including the formation of innovations in the work of the teaching staff.

The modern socio-economic circumstances call for university teachers to be professionally active and interested in their work. This is determined by personal factors such as social roles and norms of the teaching staff, as well as values established in the education environment. The significance of teachers in the social system in general is also taken into account. New social circumstances dictate the change in the teacher’s status, making the teacher more prestigious and attractive for young specialists. Another factor is the strengthening commercial aspect of education and globalization that requires professionals who can prepare competitive specialists in different spheres to be more responsible in their everyday professional work (Leskina, 2016).

Therefore, this study deals with the contradiction between the existing trends of innovative development in higher education and the degree of university teachers’ innovative potential.

The purpose of this study is to examine the way that factors of organizing university teachers’ innovative work form and develop under different conditions and the significance of the teacher’s innovative potential in this context.

A careful selection of material to study the definition of innovative potential according to Russian and foreign sources indicated that this term is widely used in economics and management.

As for the term “novation” that was proposed by legal theorists in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it is worth noting that it had been used in the negative connotation for a long time. Only by the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the term had been positively established and became part of the

education sphere as an object of theoretical analysis. Western pedagogical literature of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is characterized by a persistent interest in this topic. In the early 2000s, innovative training methods appear in the focus of the Russian pedagogical system, concerning primarily higher education. Some historians, however, are prepared to provide evidence of earlier references to innovations in pedagogy. Gradually transforming, the term “innovation” has grown into the concept of “pedagogical innovation studies” which implies a study of the very nature of introducing innovations into educational activities, considering its features within the framework of the Russian education system (Yastrebova, 2013).

Based on creativity, imaginative techniques that contribute to the emergence of new inventions and their overall rationalization, a person creates a product or process that is *innovatsiya* (from the English *innovation* – novelty, invention). Innovations are in demand on the market as they ensure qualitative growth in all aspects of enterprise efficiency and personal development of employees.

In pedagogy, the concept of innovation has numerous meanings. The term can mean several types of activity: pedagogical activity, a unique socio-pedagogical phenomenon that expresses the teacher’s creative resources and a global process of introducing pedagogical innovations into the planning and implementation of the curriculum, focused on expanding the pedagogical instrumentarium and improving the level of education in the country (Grigoreva, 2010).

In Russian pedagogical science, the synonymous terms “pedagogical innovation” and “innovation in education” are substantiated categorically due to the works of Yusufbekova (1992). Researching pedagogical innovation studies, the scholar concluded that this branch of pedagogical knowledge could be considered an independent field of science since it has the appropriate characteristics: pedagogical innovation studies contextually fit into the organization of the learning process by proposing new methods of education and training, adjusting the goals and content of training, and also have an original object of research, for which one must develop subject characteristics and methods of study (Yusufbekova, 1992).

In the 1980s, Russian pedagogy began to introduce innovations into its structure. Research has emerged that provides a conceptual basis for the new specialization. Using them as a foundation and relying on the experience of foreign colleagues, researchers obtained a scientific substantiation of the definitions of “innovations in education”, as well as “pedagogical innovations”, which are used as equivalents to this day (Grebenyuk et al., 2012).

The benefits of innovative technologies in education extend to students. While mastering high-tech teaching methods, students realize the paramount importance of the comprehensive development of the country in all the variety of industries. In this regard, studying becomes a laboratory for the formation of innovative activity. It is in the learning process that such important skills are formed as the protection of their ideas, stances and decisions, acceptance of the importance of technological development in the chosen field, participation in additional educational activities. During the study, with the use of pedagogical innovations, the development and implementation of the latest development programs take place, the need for self-realization develops without which personal improvement is impossible.

Integration is a particular feature of pedagogical innovation. The interaction between various processes in education has existed throughout the history of pedagogy, however, right now the lack of isolation between the branches of didactic science plays a dominant role, allowing a person to form a scientific style of thinking faster and more confidently. Integration actions in education are necessary and important for further development of this area (Klochkova, 2015).

Particular attention in the educational sphere is paid to personality approach. At present there is a growing interest to the problem of the typological personality traits as well as to the relation of temperament and the mechanism of psychological defense. The practical significance of the investigations in this sphere lies in the fact that the obtained results can be evaluated as the basis for the elaborating of a program for the correction or optimization of psychological defense mechanisms based on the typological characteristics of the individual.

The interaction of information and communication technologies (ICT) with pedagogy has become strategically important during the informatization of education and the formation of the teachers' innovative potential. The innovative set of tools required for this improvement has been underpinned by development proposals and legislative initiatives.

The key legal documents are the 2001 Order by the Ministry of Education "On the coordination of work in the field of informatization of education", as well as two federal laws (the 2012 Federal Law on Education and the Federal Law of the same year "On Education in the Russian Federation"). These legal documents became the basis for a series of amendments and reforms in education there is a gin the transition to informatization and innovation (Kryachkov et al., 2015). The quality of education

is one of the essential problems so innovative approaches to vocational training and training programs could be regarded as an important task which is set before institutes of higher education (Kartushina, 2021).

Let us analyze the factors that impact the innovative progress in education.

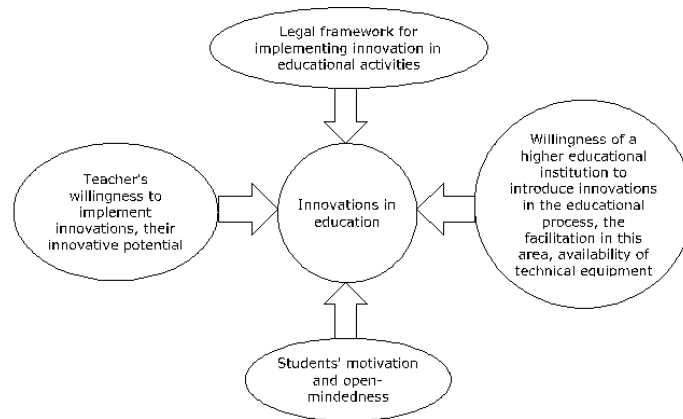


Figure 1. Factors that impact innovative progress in education.

The figure 1 above shows that there are four key reasons for the progress of innovation in education.

It is the teacher's personality and their skill that became the fundamental objects of this study. After all, further success and development in the profession are possible only using innovation in teaching. The teacher's functions and responsibilities are changing, their role in the learning process is being transformed, innovations and technological progress penetrate all areas of work. Speaking about the teacher's innovative potential, one should note, on the one hand, the continuous self-improvement and recognition of oneself as a person of a new innovative type as the basis for success in the profession and, on the other hand, the implementation of the highest quality and level of training, the professional culture of each student. Let us indicate some of the opinions given by researchers on this issue.

According to research by Tretyakova (2013), the innovative potential is a complete set of resources for the implementation of any activity and prospects as well as conditions for its implementation. It is necessary to note such details as the willingness to carry out activities and the ability to perform them.

Lapin (1986), views innovation potential as the likelihood of creating, mastering and using innovation in teaching and research activities.

The researcher Chernik (2001), notes that a teacher's innovative potential is a set of social, cultural and, importantly,

creative personality characteristics due to which the need for the implementation of pedagogical activity is improved, as well as the existence of internal aspirations to ensure this readiness through methods and the necessary didactic means. One must consider the desires and interests of the teacher, their opportunities for improvement within the profession, creativity and self-development. The innovative aspect of the teacher's potential allows them to personally find uncommon solutions to emerging difficulties, perceive and unconventionally rework them, applying the methods available in education.

The methodologist of creative pedagogy Popov (2003), proposes to consider the teacher's innovative potential as the combined characteristics of various personal and professional traits which include methodological competence that allows one to create and implement new ideas, creative approaches to the implementation of various forms and types of activities, creativity, a proactive position in life, the desire for fulfillment inside of their work, considering the ongoing innovative changes.

The university teacher's innovative potential is a personal resource. For its successful implementation, an appropriate environment and the observance of special psychological and pedagogical provisions are required. Grigoreva (2010), notes that the formation of innovative thinking affects the innovative potential of a high-level teacher, and the mechanism for creating such thinking contains four stages that are dialectically interconnected:

1. Cognitive stage is the stage of perception and implementation of innovation in the subjective reality of the student and teacher. The subsequent generation of innovations in objective reality occurs within thinking in the process of cognition.
2. Design stage. This stage is expressed through the study of philosophical theories, pedagogical and psychological structures, based on an interdisciplinary approach. The essence of this stage is integrated cognition and further use.
3. Instrumental. The implementation of technological innovation by a teacher into practice.
4. Correctional. The stage consists in making corrections and adjusting the introduced innovations to efficiently use them in practice.

Considering these stages, it is worth noting the significance of in-depth professional self-education for the creation of the teacher's innovative potential. Through continuous self-improvement, theoretical knowledge and practical developments are refined (Grigoreva, 2010).

Modern researchers of the use of ICT in teaching note that new opportunities are opening up for university teachers today but the most efficient is the combination of traditional teaching methods and the use of modern computer technologies (Korotaeva, 2020).

The establishment of interactive computer environment is a new stage in forming of interactive human knowledge as a system of information-technological and socio-psychological competences. Virtual world opens up new possibilities before mankind and promotes information-technological creative work.

The use of ICT advanced the organizational facilities of the teaching process considerably. Some researchers pay particular attention to distance learning and stress its positive influence on the process of education (Liu et al., 2020).

The popularization of distance learning also requires modern teachers to actively develop their innovative potential and master computer technologies (Liu et al., 2020).

The transfer to digital reality requires significant changes in educational methodology as well as creation of a new format for elaboration of teaching methods (Kryanev et al., 2021).

While analyzing the work of some institutes of higher education on the developing of innovative methods and methodologies it should be mentioned that the universities use different e-learning platforms. For example, LMS MAI is the main platform of e-learning in the Moscow Aviation Institute.

In the Moscow Aviation Institute at the Department of Foreign Languages of one of the factors in unlocking the innovative potential of the teaching staff is participation in annual scientific and practical student conferences, preparation for which requires the use of ICT. Sometimes it might be appropriate to use on-line format while holding a conference (Korotaeva, 2020).

Such implementation of innovations into student work allows the teacher to guide their further development, and the use of progressive methods of searching and analyzing information helps students to present their research to a wide audience (Abramova & Korotaeva, 2019).

Foreign authors see the unlocking of innovative pedagogical potential in innovative teaching as such. Innovation and a creative approach to the learning process give every teacher who strives to improve their qualifications an incentive to develop key characteristics and competencies. Pedagogical creativity using ICT in the academic

process is an indicator of an innovative type of teaching (Kalyani & Rajasekaran, 2018).

Multimedia technologies are recommended to be utilized by the teachers in all spheres of university life: in laboratories, at the lectures, during laboratory sessions and practical trainings, etc. This kind of work requires special knowledge and skills both from teachers and students.

The difference between the role of the teacher and the role of the student is mentioned by different researchers. It is generally agreed that the teacher should:

- act as an organizer of this innovative educational process;
- know how to plan and maintain the educational process;
- explain to the students how to plan and organize their work in information-communication space;
- conduct the analysis diagnostics of the educational process;
- use different instruments for independent-minded work of the students (electronic textbooks and manuals, multimedia presentations, etc.);
- take into consideration the cognitive styles of their students;
- analyze the intermediate and final results to increase efficiency of the process of education (Kotrikadze & Zharkova, 2021).

Highly qualified teachers with developed creative potential apply innovative methods easier and faster in the process of teaching in higher education institutions. To support the progress of innovation studies at higher levels of education, one needs teachers who are open to the latest teaching methods and have a lot of experience. These teachers can guide students and instill in them resilience against future professional challenges. In the foreign debate of innovative pedagogy over the past decades, the topic of a systematic movement towards the introduction of new strategies has been the most relevant.

According to Professor Shaffer (2006), absolutely. After all, if a teacher for some reason cannot read, the pedagogue will not be able to determine the quality of the text material and the usefulness of the book. The analogy with technology is clear. The teacher needs to understand the resources at their disposal to initiate the process of innovative change. If not, the learning will remain traditional.

By introducing innovations into pedagogical practice, one can close the distance between the current state of affairs in the education field and the future of education. It is the acceptance of changes and their application with the help

of pedagogical methods that have already proven their efficiency in personal development, which can significantly accelerate the movement forward.

Research by foreign colleagues confirms a positive vector in the development of teachers' perceptions of the fundamental importance of innovation and creativity in the pedagogic activity. Students' creative self-expression during educational events results in the increased motivation for learning, as well as the desire to improve their skills and abilities, allowing them to creatively introduce innovations into everyday life.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This article is based on the following modern methods:

- content analysis which consists in studying the literature on a given topic;
- system-structural analysis that penetrates deeply into modern terms and concepts, which makes it possible to clarify the relevance of their application in the course of research;
- systematization of the research results, due to which, based on the generalization of the results, the corresponding conclusions were made.

The study involved 39 teachers which is a sufficient number in the framework of the research strategy. We used the method of distributed questionnaires through which we obtained quantitative indicators for the introduction of innovative techniques. Due to the choice of the survey method for the study, we solved the tasks of assessing teachers' involvement in the process of introducing innovations into work and their pedagogical potential.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of innovative activity is to improve the ability of the pedagogical system of a higher education institution to achieve qualitatively higher educational results. This goal can be achieved provided that the teaching staff is included in innovative activities and teachers are ready for it, that is, teachers must have a high level of innovative potential. To determine the attitude of the teachers at the Department of Foreign Languages at the MAI to innovation, the results of the questionnaire were analyzed.

For most teachers (75%), innovation at a university is "the use of ICT". Moreover, 15% believe that these are "non-typical teaching methods" and for 10% this means professional development.

90% of teachers have a positive attitude towards innovative activities carried out in the higher educational institution,

but 35% of respondents were not ready for the introduction of innovations. In this case, we mean the sharp transition to distance learning due to the spread of COVID-19. To organize adequate distance learning for MAI students, all the necessary resources were involved, including the digital platform Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) - LMS MAI Moodle (Ponyaeva, 2020) which required teachers to master computer and Internet technologies in the shortest possible time.

The platform LMS MAI Moodle is recognized as very effective because it gives the opportunity of communicating for the students and teachers during the whole educational process.

As a result, the teachers' work has increased sharply, especially, as the teachers noted, at the initial stage of launching distance learning. At that point, only 8% of the department's teachers were working with the LMS MAI system and 39% completed a further education course "Practical issues of developing educational and methodological complexes in the Moodle environment". Moreover, teachers had to work with programs such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams and others to conduct video seminars in a foreign language with students in Bachelor and Master programs, as well as postgraduate students. Despite this, 97% of the respondents had previously used ICT in their teaching but 10% did so only under the influence of senior management and tried to adhere to the most traditional forms of communication with students.

The teachers ranked the innovative tools that they use in their pedagogical activities according to the degree of importance:

1. information and computer technologies,
2. modern teaching technologies,
3. stimulation of students' creative activity,
4. mastering and implementation of external innovative experience.

Let us now consider the assessment of the qualities that form the teachers' innovative potential, which are implemented in the process of pedagogical activity (Table 1).

Table 1. Qualities that form the teachers' innovative potential.

| qualities realized in the process of pedagogical activity | total score |
|---|-------------|
| ability to generate new ideas                             | 155         |
| ability to implement new ideas                            | 120         |
| open-mindedness   | 185         |
| readiness to improve one's own activities                 | 186         |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| cognitive activity in the field of innovations in education  | 110 |
| readiness for targeted searching and obtaining new knowledge | 98  |

Therefore, the teachers gave the highest evaluation to their readiness to improve their work and open-mindedness. Many also highly evaluated the ability to generate new ideas in practice, however, the ability to implement them in practice was assessed much lower. The teachers were the least prepared for a targeted search and acquisition of new knowledge, which most often occurs as a result of teachers' research and publication activities.

As benefits of innovation for student learning, teachers identified:

- increasing interest in the subject,
- increase in completed tasks,
- better understanding of the material.

Therefore, 98% of respondents consider it necessary to increase their innovative potential for more successful teaching. To do this, the teachers most commonly use further education programs at their university (78%) and self-education (45%) (Figure 2).

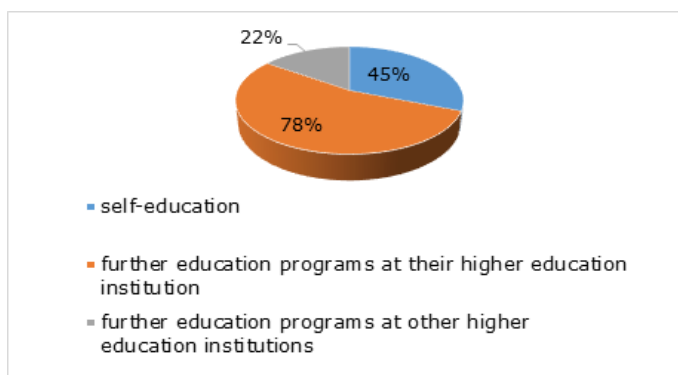


Figure 2. Methods of advanced training for teachers that increase their innovative potential.

## CONCLUSIONS

The professional activity of a teacher in higher education is currently seen as a necessary condition for ensuring a high level of education for future specialists. Modern requirements for a university teacher imply a reorganization of the value-semantic sphere, a transformation of views on the issue of developing the university teacher's scientific and innovative potential, their self-improvement in professional activity. These circumstances emphasize the relevance of identifying and substantiating trends in the development of the university teacher's innovative potential.

The article deals with the term “pedagogical innovation” which is interpreted as a pedagogical novelty; purposeful progressive change that introduces stable elements (innovations) into the educational environment, improving the characteristics of individual parts, components and the education system as a whole.

The innovative activity can be interpreted as a personal category, as a creative process and the result of creative activity; innovative activity requires respective subjects to have a certain degree of freedom. The value of innovative activity for an individual is associated with the possibility of self-expression, the use of their abilities, creativity.

The following is necessary for the development of the teacher's innovative activities: state support, support from the higher education institution and the teacher's desire to improve.

As a result of the study, the following areas for development of university teachers' innovative potential can be identified:

1. Assessment of the teaching staff's level of innovative potential.
2. Creation of an innovative informational education field: formation of a bank of educational innovations; conducting psychological and pedagogical seminars on topical problems of modern education; acquisition of scientific, research and methodological knowledge by teachers; providing teachers with literature, Internet access.
3. Establishing relations with scientific institutions, attracting scientists as research advisers, consultants, speakers at theoretical seminars and practical classes, developing the teachers' research skills, supplementing theoretical seminars with individual and group consultations.

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