

THE ESSENCE OF INTEGRATION AND THE TASKS OF THE INTEGRATIVE APPROACH IN EDUCATION

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Abstract: The integrative approach in education is based on interdisciplinary connections, combining various academic disciplines, topics, and types of activities to achieve a holistic and systematic acquisition of knowledge and the formation of key competences. This paper analyzes the essence of integration, its main principles and goals, as well as the impact of the integrative approach on the effectiveness of education and the personal development of students. The main focus is given to the practical application of this approach and its role in developing systemic thinking and preparing students for solving complex problems.

Keywords: integration, integrative education, learning, interdisciplinarity, intersubject connections, wholeness, systematicity, competence, personal development, synthesis of knowledge, practical orientation, effectiveness of education.

Currently, there is an increasing number of people studying the Russian language. Therefore, the search for effective approaches to teaching Russian as a foreign language is a pressing issue due to the need for students of different ages and language proficiency levels to master it. This task can be successfully addressed using an integrative approach. The integrative approach in teaching Russian as a foreign language is essential for the interconnected mastery of all types of speech activity, as well as the inclusion of humanitarian, cultural, and regional studies aspects in the lesson content.

Many studies, both in our country and abroad, have been dedicated to the issue of the integrative approach in foreign language education. Significant progress has been made in Bulgaria, Germany, the United States, France, and England. In Russia, this direction is actively developing in many schools in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and other cities. However, the concept of a fully integrated program for learners of Russian as a foreign language has not yet been realized. In this regard, the use of integrative teaching methods remains relevant for mastering non-native and foreign languages.

The definition of integration goals is associated with the conscious need and identified opportunity to connect separate subjects, topics, and sections. After selecting the necessary content objects for integration, we highlight the invariant and variable components—the fundamental elements of the subject matter. The definition of the systemic integration factor refers to identifying a basis for unification. Without a systemic integration factor acting as an integrator, no knowledge unification is possible.

In the developed linguistic-didactic model for Russian as a Foreign Language (RFL) lessons, the integrator and systemic factor is the educational text, which serves simultaneously as material for:

Acquiring knowledge in the subject "Russian as a Foreign Language";

Interconnected learning of all types of speech activity;

Developing the necessary skills and abilities;

Fostering spiritual culture and universal human values.

Despite the extensive discussion on integration, different sciences and even sections of the same subject are still presented as self-contained, independent entities, with little connection to other aspects of the subject or academic disciplines. Students must be able to identify functional links between these areas and their components and recognize common methodological approaches to knowledge acquisition.

In the Russian language, elements of study include sounds, letters, words, phrases, sentences, individual statements, and entire texts. The teaching objective is to integrate different levels into a single unified system, leading to speech communication and creative speech generation. Mastery of a language, as emphasized by O.D. Mitrofanova and V.G. Kostomarov, does not imply simply acquiring a specific amount of linguistic knowledge; rather, it involves developing communicative competence in the language. Language proficiency can be understood as the ability to comprehend oral and written texts, extract all their embedded meanings, and create one's own texts with varying degrees of fluency; the ability to express the same thought in different ways (ideally, using all possible means within a given language) and respond appropriately to real-life situations using speech acts (sentences, phrases, texts, etc.); the ability to distinguish between grammatically correct and incorrect statements; and the skill to explain and use the right words at the right time in the right context.

The mechanisms of pedagogical integration include comparative analysis, constructive synthesis, generalization, and systematization. These operations involve recoding known information into new combinations, much like reassembling fragments of a broken vessel in a new way, revealing new properties and meanings. The relevance of integrative learning is determined by the fact that global contemporary problems (ecological, energy-related, socio-economic, national-epic, etc.) are exerting an integrative influence on humanity, which is becoming increasingly aware of interconnection, interdependence, shared destinies, and the unity of natural and social processes. The understanding of the need for cooperation in solving common modern challenges leads to the internationalization of human life. Consequently, our worldview is fundamentally changing, and the general orientation of individuals is shifting towards the necessity of perceiving the world as an interconnected whole. Integrative-holistic worldviews demand the education of a holistic individual, making it a goal of modern education.

It is important to remember that the essence and nature of scientifically grounded education always depend on its goal. In psychology, the concept of a "holistic individual" has many interpretations. The approach of A. Maslow, which considers integration as the key characteristic of such an individual, seems valid. According to Maslow, this property ensures the creative abilities of a person. Creative individuals in any field—whether artists, theorists, inventors, or parents—are "integrators" because they can "combine different and even opposing elements... The extent to which creativity is synthesizing and constructive partly depends on the internal integration of the individual." Education that prepares a holistic person capable of integrating opposites should provide students with the opportunity to gain experience in integrative activities. Integrative education can be considered natural to the holistic essence of a person. A.S. Makarenko also wrote: "...we must learn to organize education in such a way that our achievements reflect the improvement of the entire personality system. Educators should primarily focus on developing synthetic pedagogy."

Key Aspects of Integrative Learning

Integrative learning involves the implementation of three main principles reflecting different aspects of the educational process: content, methodology (procedural aspect), and organizational structure. Let's examine these in detail:

1. **Content of Learning:** At all educational levels (especially in schools), integrative education structurally synthesizes natural sciences and humanities. Constructive synthesis implies that the combination of scientific and humanitarian knowledge should lead to the holistic development of the individual. This is justified by the trend of convergence between scientific and humanitarian cultures in modern society. The opposition between these cultures, reflected in subject-focused education at the expense of meaning-making, does not correspond to society's need for holistic individuals. Integration of natural sciences and humanities makes it possible to unite two complementary ways of perceiving the world—through images and numbers—thus combining emotional-humanitarian, personal-meaningful, and rational-structural, symbolic-logical comprehension of the world. This constructive (result-oriented) dialogue between natural and humanitarian sciences creates favorable conditions for developing generalized knowledge and forming a unified worldview.
2. **Teaching Methodology:** Modern pedagogy requires the integration of different educational concepts, technologies, methods, and approaches, even those that may seem contradictory. For a long time, researchers sought the "best" universal teaching theory or method. However, given the diversity of human individuality, educational conditions, and learning objectives, no single method can effectively address all pedagogical tasks. Today, there is a growing recognition of the value of multiple educational paradigms coexisting within a unified educational space.
3. **Organization of Learning:** Active learning techniques, such as interactive lesson structures, concentration of material, and the use of diverse teaching methods, help optimize student-teacher interaction and improve learning outcomes.

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