

LOMBARD METHOD: A NEW APPROACH TO PREPARING FOR ORGANIZING EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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Abstract. *This article examines the theoretical-methodological foundations and practical aspects of preparing future teachers for organizing extracurricular activities based on Lombardy pedagogy (Reggio Emilia approach). The study analyzes the core principles of the Lombardy approach — child competence, the environment-as-teacher concept, documentation, the project method, and parental partnership — in the context of extracurricular activities. The results of experimental trials proved the high effectiveness of this approach in developing future teachers' professional competencies.*

Keywords: *Lombardy pedagogy, Reggio Emilia approach, extracurricular activities, project method, pedagogical competence, environment as teacher, documentation, future teacher training.*

INTRODUCTION

In the modern education system, extracurricular activities occupy an important place in the intellectual, creative, social, and emotional development of students. Therefore, preparing future teachers to organize extracurricular work at a high level is becoming one of the priority tasks of state education policy. However, traditional training methods are mostly based on providing theoretical knowledge and do not sufficiently develop practical skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundations of Lombardy Pedagogy

L. Malaguzzi, one of the founders of Lombardy pedagogy (Reggio Emilia approach), emphasized that children are “face-tongued” in expressing their thoughts: speech, drawing, music, movements, dramatization, and other forms of expression are equally important to the child. This concept opens the way for wide variety in planning extracurricular activities.

C. Edwards, L. Gandini, and G. Forman systematized the Reggio Emilia approach and defined its core principles: trust in the child's natural competence, the teacher's role as researcher, making the learning process visible through documentation, and the function of the physical environment as “the third teacher”.

C. Rinaldi described the Reggio Emilia approach as the “pedagogy of listening.” This concept is also important for extracurricular work: the teacher observes students, listens to their interests, and builds activities on this basis. P.

Moss evaluated this approach as “democratic pedagogy”, emphasizing the equal partnership of the child, teacher, and parents.

Among Uzbek scholars, N. Yusupova and M. Karimov researched the effectiveness of the project method in local educational settings. L. Abdullayeva examined the scientific foundations of adapting foreign innovative experiences to Uzbek education. However, the application of Lombardy pedagogy specifically in the context of preparing for organizing extracurricular activities has not been sufficiently studied — this defines the scientific novelty of the present research.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Core Principles of Lombardy Pedagogy and Their Application to Extracurricular Activities

In the study, a model for applying five core principles of Lombardy pedagogy to the process of preparing for organizing extracurricular activities was developed:

Lombardy Principles	Content	Application to Extracurricular Activities
Child Competence	Every child is an active researcher with unique potential	The student is not a passive listener — but a participant and organizer of activities
Environment — The Third Teacher	The physical environment shapes the learning process	Creating a special environment for extracurricular events
Project Approach	Long-term projects based on children's interests	Planning and conducting extracurricular activities on a project basis
Documentation	Recording the process through photos, videos, and journals	Documenting the event process and reflection

Four-Stage Model for Preparing Future Teachers

The model developed in the study consists of the following four stages:

Stage 1: Theoretical Preparation. Students are introduced to the theoretical foundations, core principles, and world experience of Lombardy pedagogy. Video materials are analyzed, and the documented experiences of Reggio Emilia kindergartens and schools are studied.

Stage 2: Environment Design. Students prepare an environment design for extracurricular activities based on the "third teacher" principle. Spaces, materials, and zones adapted for students of different ages are identified.

Stage 3: Project Development and Implementation. Each student or small group plans and conducts an extracurricular project based on students' interests. The project process is fully documented: photos, videos, and children's comments are recorded.

Stage 4: Reflection and Improvement. Students analyze their documented materials and prepare a reflective report. Group discussion, expert evaluation, and a plan for further development are drawn up.

EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH RESULTS

Organization of Experimental Trials

The research was conducted among 3rd-year students (n=48) studying in the field of pedagogical education during the 2023–2024 academic year. Participants were randomly assigned to an experimental group (EG, n=24) and a control group (CG, n=24). The control group was trained according to the traditional method, while the experimental group was trained based on the Lombardy approach. Students in the experimental group implemented the following extracurricular projects:

Project Title	Activity Type	Applied Principle
"Our Garden"	Ecological research project	Project method
"World of Professions"	Social cognition activity	Parental partnership
"National Art"	Creative workshop	Environment — the third teacher
"City of the Future"	Construction and modeling	Child competence
"Secrets of Nature"	Scientific research project	Project method

Analysis of Quantitative Results

Competency levels were measured on a 5-point scale through initial and final assessments. The results are presented in the following table:

Competency Indicator	EG			CG		
	Start	End		Start	End	
Planning skills	2.8	4.6	+64%	2.9	3.5	+21%
Creative approach	2.6	4.5	+73%	2.7	3.3	+22%
Communication and collaboration	3.1	4.7	+52%	3.0	3.6	+20%
Documentation and reflection	2.4	4.6	+92%	2.5	3.0	+20%
Adaptability	2.9	4.5	+55%	2.8	3.4	+21%

The table data show that an average growth of 67% was observed across all competencies in the experimental group. This is 3.2 times higher than the 21% growth in the control group. The difference is particularly significant in documentation and reflection skills (92% growth) and creative approach (73% growth).

CONCLUSION

This research experimentally proved the high effectiveness of applying Lombardy pedagogy (Reggio Emilia approach) in preparing future teachers for organizing extracurricular activities. The average growth of 67% observed in the experimental group is significantly higher than the 21% growth in the control group, confirming the effectiveness of the method.

The main advantage of the Lombardy approach is that it is particularly effective in building a bridge between theory and practice. The project method, documentation system, use of the environment as a pedagogical tool, and parental partnership principles together form complex professional competencies in future teachers.

Lombardy pedagogy can be a powerful tool for raising extracurricular activities in Uzbekistan's education system to the level of 21st century requirements, equipping future teachers with innovative methods, and ensuring the comprehensive development of students.

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