

THE CONCEPT

OF TEACHING METHODS AND APPROACHES IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

EL CONCEPTO DE MÉTODOS Y ENFOQUES DE ENSEÑANZA EN LAS INSTITUCIONES DE EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR

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ABSTRACT

Since Azerbaijan's restoration of independence in 1991, its higher education sector has undergone sweeping reforms to meet the standards of leading global systems, highlighting an acute need to refine teaching methods—particularly in history instruction. Despite top-down decrees mandating modernization, there is a paucity of focused analyses on the design and implementation of subject-specific pedagogical strategies. This study addresses that gap by systematically examining the challenges and opportunities inherent in enhancing history teaching methods within Azerbaijani universities. Grounded in a historical-comparative methodology and informed by primary governmental decrees, and a range of domestic and international academic sources, the research identifies key conceptual distinctions among teacher-centered approaches, learner strategies, and joint instructional methods, further delineating techniques as constituent steps within broader methods. Through critical analysis, three main categories of instructional methods are elucidated: (1) organizing and executing pedagogical activities; (2) monitoring the efficacy of teaching and learning processes; and (3) stimulating instructional engagement. Additionally, the roles of passive, active, interactive, and heuristic approaches are evaluated for their impact on student outcomes. The findings underscore the necessity of integrating a diversified methodological toolkit and clarifying method-technique relationships to promote consistent, high-quality history education. These insights inform recommendations for targeted curricular revisions, professional development initiatives, and policy measures, thereby contributing to the theoretical discourse on instructional design and offering practical pathways for elevating teaching standards in higher education contexts.

Keywords: Education, Teaching Methods, Instructional Strategies, Pedagogical Techniques, Educational Objectives, Higher Education Reform.

RESUMEN

Desde la restauración de la independencia de Azerbaiyán en 1991, su sector de educación superior ha experimentado profundas reformas para cumplir con los estándares de los principales sistemas mundiales, lo que pone de relieve la urgente necesidad de perfeccionar los métodos de enseñanza, en particular en la enseñanza de la historia. A pesar de los decretos dictados que exigen la modernización, existe una escasez de análisis centrados en el diseño y la implementación de estrategias pedagógicas específicas para cada asignatura. Este estudio aborda esta deficiencia examinando sistemáticamente los desafíos y las oportunidades inherentes a la mejora de los métodos de enseñanza de la historia en las universidades azerbaiyanas. Basada en una metodología histórico-comparativa e informada por los principales decretos gubernamentales y diversas fuentes académicas nacionales e internacionales, la investigación identifica distinciones conceptuales clave entre los enfoques centrados en el profesorado, las estrategias del alumno y los métodos de enseñanza conjunta, definiendo con más detalle las técnicas como pasos constitutivos de métodos más amplios. Mediante un análisis crítico, se dilucidan tres categorías principales de métodos de enseñanza: (1) organización y ejecución de actividades pedagógicas; (2) supervisión de la eficacia de los procesos de enseñanza y aprendizaje; y (3) fomento de la participación docente. Además, se evalúa el impacto de los enfoques pasivos, activos, interactivos y heurísticos en los resultados estudiantiles. Los hallazgos subrayan la necesidad de integrar un conjunto de herramientas metodológicas diversificadas y aclarar las relaciones entre métodos y técnicas para promover una educación histórica consistente y de alta calidad. Estos conocimientos fundamentan recomendaciones para revisiones curriculares específicas, iniciativas de desarrollo profesional y medidas políticas, contribuyendo así al discurso teórico sobre el diseño instruccional y ofreciendo vías prácticas para elevar los estándares docentes en contextos de educación superior.

Palabras clave: Educación, Métodos de enseñanza, Estrategias instruccionales, Técnicas pedagógicas, Objetivos educativos, Reforma de la educación superior.

INTRODUCTION

From the medieval period to the twenty first century, the nature of teaching has remained a focal point of philosophical and pedagogical inquiry. Scholars and practitioners alike have continuously examined the essence of teaching, the organization of instructional activities, and the methods by which knowledge and skills are transmitted and acquired. Such sustained debate is unsurprising, for teaching is fundamentally a human endeavor: it unfolds in the interplay of individuals endowed with diverse

physical, psychological, social, and moral attributes, each bringing unique experiences to the learning environment. As scientific knowledge expands and technological innovations reshape the very content of what is taught, teaching methods must likewise evolve—both in form and substance—to remain effective and relevant. Moreover, successive generations of learners exhibit broader worldviews and heightened cognitive capacities compared to their predecessors, necessitating continual pedagogical renewal (Bates, 2022).

At its core, teaching is the orchestration of human interactions aimed at facilitating the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and values. It involves two principal actors—teachers and learners—each with distinct roles yet engaged in a shared instructional enterprise (Pech et al., 2021). Teaching methods, broadly defined, constitute the systematic paths and strategies that guide this joint activity toward specific educational objectives. Within the context of history instruction, the term method encompasses both the teacher's pedagogical tactics and the learner's cognitive operations (Castro et al., 2024). To distinguish these dimensions, pedagogical literature differentiates:

- Teaching methods, referring to the approaches and strategies initiated by the educator;
- Learning methods, denoting the actions and techniques employed by students;
- Instructional methods, capturing the integrated or collaborative processes where teaching and learning converge.

A critical conceptual distinction lies between methods and techniques. While a method denotes a coherent strategy or pathway for achieving educational ends, a technique represents a discrete component or step within that method—the operational “building block” of instructional activity. For example, discussion may be classified as an instructional method, whereas brainstorming or concept mapping serve as specific techniques that realize the broader method.

Pedagogical research traditionally organizes teaching methods into functional categories based on their purpose and mode of interaction. Among these are identified three principal groups in the domain of history education:

1. Methods for Organizing and Implementing Teaching Activities

- Oral, Visual, and Practical Methods: Distinguished by the primary means of expression—verbal narration, use of visual aids (maps, diagrams, films), and hands on activities (archival exercises, role playing).
- Productive, Explanatory Illustrative, Exploratory, Research, and Problem Based Methods: Classified

according to the didactic tasks they address—ranging from the presentation of new material to the promotion of discovery and critical inquiry.

- Inductive and Deductive Methods: Differentiated by logical structure—induction moves from particular historical facts to general conclusions; deduction applies general historiographical principles to specific cases.
1. 2. Methods for Monitoring Instructional and Cognitive Processes
 - Formative and Summative Assessments: Including oral questioning, written examinations, self-assessment protocols, and peer review mechanisms designed to gauge knowledge retention and skill development.
 - Reflective Practice Tools: Such as learning journals and structured debriefs that invite students to articulate their evolving understanding and identify areas for improvement.
 2. 3. Methods for Stimulating Engagement and Motivation
 - Incentive Based Techniques: Employing rewards, recognition, and goal setting strategies to foster a sense of responsibility and intrinsic interest in historical inquiry.
 - Collaborative Learning Formats: Team projects, debates, and simulations that leverage social dynamics to sustain persistence and deepen engagement.

On the other hand, the second half of the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of pedagogical technologies—encompassing programmed instruction, systems theory, cybernetics, and informatics—which reconceptualized teaching as a managed, systemic process (Vincent-Lancrin, 2023). The digitization of educational content, advent of computer assisted learning, and proliferation of internet resources have drastically expanded the repertoire of instructional tools, such as:

- Dynamic Visual and Multimedia Aids: Educational films, interactive timelines, and virtual reconstructions of historical sites engage multiple sensory modalities, enhancing comprehension and retention.
- E Learning Platforms and E Libraries: Enabling access to vast repositories of secondary and primary sources, collaborative annotation tools, and asynchronous discussion forums.
- Simulation and Gamification: Role playing games and scenario simulations immerse students in historical contexts, prompting strategic decision making and perspective taking.
- Adaptive Learning Systems: Tailoring content delivery to individual learner profiles, providing real time feedback, and scaffolding complex historical concepts at appropriate cognitive levels.

Thus, effective integration of ICT requires that teachers not only master technological tools but also align them

purposefully with pedagogical objectives—ensuring that digital media enhance, rather than distract from, the development of critical historiographical skills (Jiangmei & Ghasemy, 2025; Ngao et al., 2022).

In the national context of Azerbaijan, the restoration of national independence in 1991 marked a decisive turning point in the evolution of the country's education system. Under the leadership of Heydar Aliyev, the 1995 "Education Reform Programme of the Republic of Azerbaijan" mandated the alignment of teaching practices with international standards, the integration of universal educational values, and the implementation of significant qualitative changes in curriculum content and pedagogy. Within this reform framework, higher education institutions were charged with preparing educators capable of employing contemporary instructional strategies tailored to both global pedagogical principles and national cultural values. History instruction, as a core component of the humanities curriculum, presented particular challenges and opportunities, given its dual role in cultivating both critical thinking and national identity.

Drawing upon the elements discussed so far, the goal of this research is to analyze the teaching methods and techniques employed in history instruction within Azerbaijani higher education. We aim to identify the challenges and propose viable solutions for the enhancement of history teaching methods and techniques in Azerbaijan. To this end, it is exploring the existing problems associated with the improvement of instructional methods and approaches, with a particular focus on their application in the national educational context. Some of the research activities addressed are: (1) to clarify foundational concepts and their interrelationships; (2) to classify and analyze existing instructional approaches—particularly passive, active, interactive, and heuristic methods; (3) to identify obstacles hindering pedagogical innovation; and (4) to propose viable strategies for enhancing the effectiveness and quality of history teaching in the national context.

DEVELOPMENT

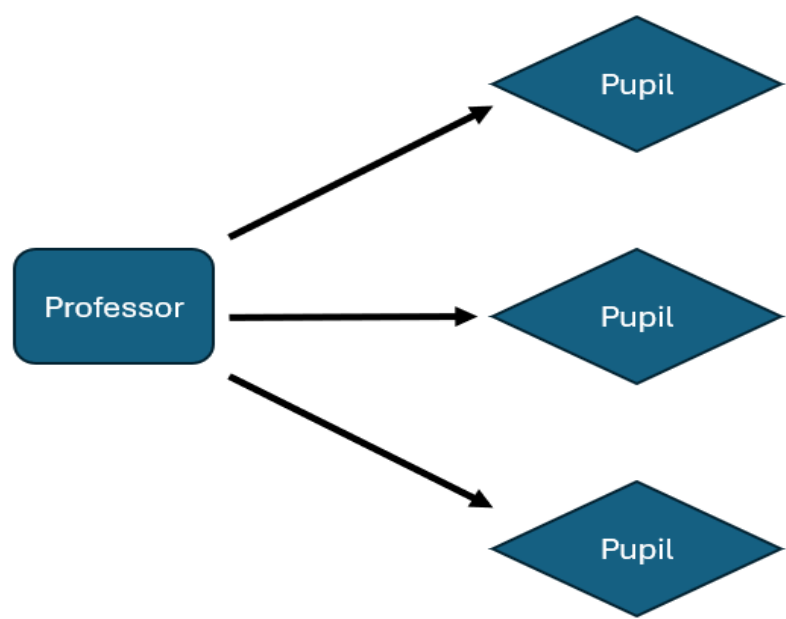
Teaching methods are the system of organizing the joint activities of the teacher and students in order to achieve the objectives set in the teaching process. By teaching methods, we refer to the set of paths and strategies used to achieve the intended objectives. In the context of history instruction, the concept of method applies to the activities of both the teacher and the students. Teaching methods are those related to the teacher's activities, while learning methods pertain to the activities of the students. Methods related to their joint activities are referred to as instructional methods. Within the structure of teaching methods, it is important to distinguish between methods

and techniques. A technique is an element of a method; it is a component that represents a distinct step in the application of the method.

Teaching methods are the means of interaction between the teacher and students, through which the transmission and acquisition of the knowledge and skills outlined in the content of education are realized. According to the established tradition in history instruction, teaching methods are divided into three main groups: Methods for organizing and implementing teaching activities. These include: a) Oral, visual, and practical methods (based on the means of expression of the teaching material); b) Productive, explanatory-illustrative, exploratory, research, problem-based methods, etc.; c) Inductive and deductive methods (based on the logic of expressing and accepting the teaching material). The second group consists of methods for monitoring the effectiveness of instructional and cognitive activities. These include oral and written assessments, as well as self-assessments of the effectiveness of knowledge and skill acquisition. The third group includes methods for stimulating instructional and cognitive activities. These methods involve incentives for the development of motivation, a sense of responsibility, commitments, and interests in the process of acquiring knowledge and skills.

In teaching practice, there are alternative approaches to defining teaching methods, which are based on the cognitive level of the teaching material. These include passive, active, interactive, heuristic methods, and others. The passive method (Figure1) is a form of interaction between the teacher and students, in which the teacher is the main active agent, controlling the course of the lesson, while the students act as passive listeners who follow the teacher's directives. In passive lessons, the teacher's interaction with students is carried out through tests, surveys, and other methods (Davydov, 1996, pp. 228–235). Modern pedagogical technologies and the effectiveness of students' learning of teaching material consider the passive method to be the least efficient. However, despite this, it still possesses certain advantages. This method allows for relatively easy preparation by the teacher and provides the opportunity to present a larger amount of teaching material within the limited time frame of the lesson.

Fig 1. Student-professor relationship in the passive method.

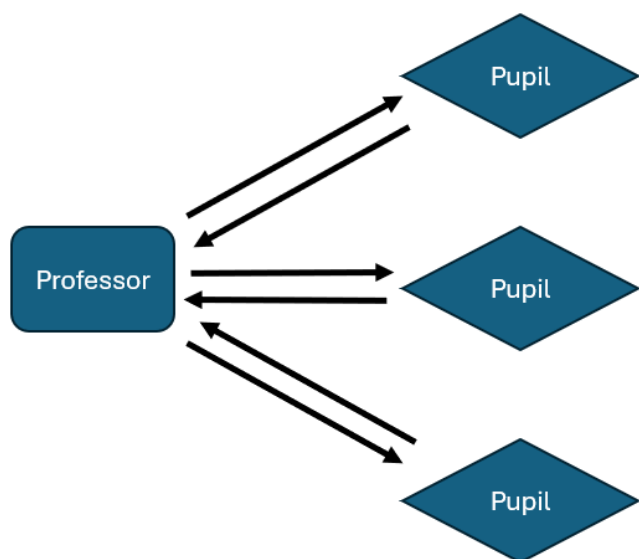


Source: own elaboration.

Considering these advantages, many teachers prefer the passive method over other methods. It should be noted that, in certain cases, an experienced teacher can skillfully utilize this approach. The lecture is the most widely used form of passive teaching. This type of lesson is typically prevalent in universities, where the goal is to provide an in-depth understanding of a subject.

The active method (Figure 2) is a method in which the teacher and students engage in mutual interaction during the lesson. In this approach, students are not passive listeners, but active participants in the lesson. In a passive lesson, the teacher is the primary active agent and the lesson manager. In contrast, in the active method, both the teacher and students have equal rights. While passive methods imply an authoritarian style of interaction, active methods are more aligned with a democratic style. Many equate active and interactive methods, but despite common perception, there are distinctions between them (Alekhin, 1983, p. 179). Interactive methods can be regarded as the most contemporary form of active methods.

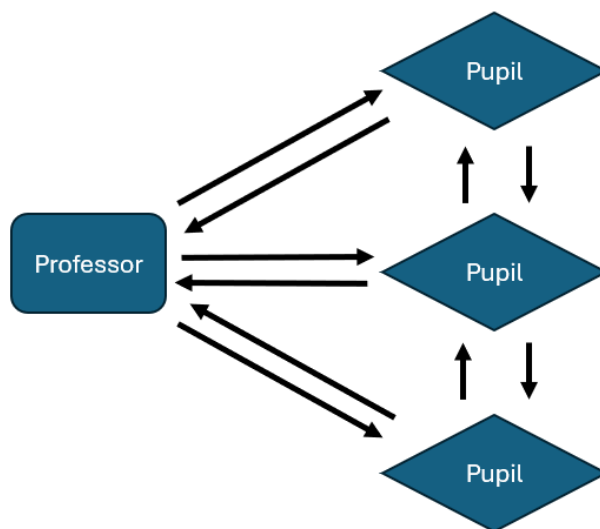
Fig 2. Student-teacher relationship in the active method.



Source: own elaboration

The interactive method (Figure 3) involves establishing mutual interaction with everyone, being in a conversation or dialogue mode. In other words, unlike active methods, interactive methods focus on broader interaction among students, not only with the teacher but also with each other, and emphasize student activity within the educational process (Mahkamova, 2022). In interactive lessons, the teacher's role is to guide students toward achieving the lesson objectives. The teacher also prepares the lesson plan, which typically includes interactive exercises and tasks that facilitate students' learning of the material during their execution. Therefore, the key components of interactive lessons are the interactive exercises and tasks carried out by the students. The significant difference between interactive exercises and ordinary tasks is that students not only consolidate the material they have already learned but also identify new material they are learning (Karimov, 2007, pp. 17–19).

Fig 3. Student-teacher relationship in the interactive method.



Source: own elaboration

The method of instruction, being a complex process, is used to effectively implement the goals, content, principles, and regularities of teaching. The effective implementation of the objectives and content of instruction largely depends on the practical potential of the methods employed during the teaching process. It is precisely these capabilities that instructional methods are designed to provide. The more the methods applied in the teaching process contribute to development, the higher the effectiveness of teaching becomes. Therefore, interactive teaching methods are given priority.

Development-oriented and result-focused instruction primarily fulfills three functions. Therefore, it is essential to consider these functions in the teaching process: 1) Pedagogical function: This includes factors that influence students' development related to instruction, such as communication, microenvironment, personal experience, and teaching methods; 2) Psychological function: This involves the psychological capacities that ensure the assimilation of learning outcomes by students, including their effort, interests, and personal characteristics; 3) Social function: This refers to the provision of knowledge and skills related to morality, labor, science and art, and religion. As the social environment develops, the essence of the teaching process and the content of teaching methods also change. Accordingly, after the Republic of Azerbaijan embarked on the path of independence, teaching methods were renewed in content in accordance with the nature of development (Abbasov et al., 2019, p. 99).

Society has posed a challenge to educational institutions to cultivate individuals who are capable of independent

thinking, are well-rounded, competitive, creative, and innovative. In order to fulfill and implement these stated objectives, it is possible to utilize the teaching methods of developed, advanced countries while taking into account national and moral values. In order to activate the teaching process, the teacher must employ methods that can guide students toward learning, with the aim of developing their thinking skills and stimulating interest in creativity. The teacher should provide comprehensive support to the student so that they can comprehend the world and apply the acquired knowledge and skills in real life. In lessons organized through the application of new teaching technologies, the teacher's role varies significantly. In active learning environments, the instructor's functions are expanded. Here, the teacher assumes the roles of a guide and instructor, a designer (who determines the structure and format), and a facilitator — someone who ensures effective group communication. As mentioned, the teacher's functions now include the role of a designer. As a designer, the teacher must define topics in alignment with the curriculum and the content of the educational program (Abbasov et al., 2019, p. 100).

The effectiveness and quality of teaching are closely related to the correct selection and application of methods. As we know, the word "method" comes from Greek, meaning to achieve the set goal. In pedagogical and historical literature, alongside the term "method," the term "approach" is also used (Karimov, 2007, p. 97). The paths used to achieve the set goals are referred to as methods. Teaching methods, as a whole, constitute one of the elements of the teaching process and work together with other elements. The teaching method serves the goal and content of the teaching process. As the goals and content of teaching change, the method, in turn, also changes.

There are up to a hundred teaching methods, and there is no unity in their classification. The most general classification divides active methods into two main groups: individual and group (Kenzhaevna & Abdukhalikovna, 2023). More specific groups include: discussion, game, training, and ranking. In the teaching of history and pedagogical literature, separate classifications of teaching methods have been provided. For example, according to the sources of knowledge, there are verbal, visual, and practical (hands-on) methods; according to the didactic tasks, there are methods for testing knowledge and skills, and methods for delivering new knowledge; based on the cognitive activities of students, there are reproductive, explanatory-illustrative, problem-based, heuristic, and partially exploratory or research methods, etc.

Among the information-developing methods, the oral explanation of the teacher holds a prominent place. This is because when the teacher explains verbally, they address a number of didactic issues. Not only does the

teacher provide information to the students, but they also manage the process by which students acquire knowledge, thus creating an environment for the development of their cognitive abilities. The advantage of the explanation method is that the teacher can provide a substantial amount of information to the students in a short period of time. In addition to this, the teacher also manages their cognitive activities.

There are three types of oral explanations by the teacher. The first is narration, the second is clarification, and the third is a school lecture (Karimov, 2007, p. 102). The teacher's narration is the act of presenting events or facts in a vivid and emotional manner. The teacher's explanation, on the other hand, relies on facts and evidence. During the explanation, it is essential and necessary for students to answer questions and engage in discussions. The lecture conducted by the teacher lasts 30-35 minutes in secondary school and is characterized by its scholarly nature. While the teacher is speaking, students are also trained in listening culture, and skills such as note-taking and planning are developed among them.

The work on the secondary school textbook goes through several stages. In the initial stage, the student becomes acquainted with the text. In the next stage, the student reads it several times and tries to retain it in their memory. At this stage, the student notes down any new words encountered in their notebook and tries to learn their meanings using various tools, such as dictionaries, question books, the internet, etc. In the next stage, after reading the text, the student covers the book and explains the lesson to themselves. During this process, they not only prove theorems but also revisit the parts they found difficult and read them again. In the fourth stage, the student attempts to apply the new lesson and the theory they have learned in practice. In the final, fifth stage, they take notes related to the lesson they have studied and create a sort of project for the lesson they will discuss (Abayev, 2006, p. 47).

Preparing a presentation or report means creating a certain volume of text by using various sources on a predetermined topic, while preserving scientific information without falsification, and presenting it as it is, whether it is done by the student or the teacher. Preparing a report involves reading several books related to a specific topic, categorizing those sources, and then drawing a general conclusion from them. After reading those books, the summaries and generalizations are noted down in a notebook. The teaching methods mentioned above can also include preparing plans, developing theses, conducting laboratory work, creating illustrations, practical tasks, and so on.

Related to the above, one has to address an important question: what is pedagogy? Pedagogy is a new perspective on the teaching process with the application of

teaching technologies. According to this perspective, the teaching process should differ from the traditional methods, and it should be a maximally manageable process. It is known that the history of teaching technologies began in the second half of the 20th century with the emergence of new technical tools and devices for the assessment of knowledge (Pasayev & Rustamov, 2007, p. 178). In earlier times, it was understood that technical tools were only meant to be used in technological training. It was believed that technology served as an auxiliary tool primarily for providing more information and data. However, the integration of technology into teaching is actively developing at various stages of education. Scholars predict that in the future, it will be possible to use educational tools independently without the assistance of the teacher or school.

Since the mid-20th century, programmed instruction, followed by informatics, systems theory, and cybernetics, became the foundation for understanding the teaching process as a technology. Since then, the teaching process has been viewed as a comprehensive system. Everything from objectives to outcomes is included in this framework. The main idea was the concept of visualizing instructional technology on the screen. The modern development of scientific and technological progress has naturally created a strong necessity and opportunities for the application of technology in education. The demand for quality education and science has historically been taken into account and reflected in the principles and laws of pedagogical processes. The demands of the modern era cannot be met without considering computers, the internet, distance education, e-books, e-libraries, and so on. Active or interactive teaching refers thus to the educational process where students actively engage in cognitive activities, and the teaching takes place in a collaborative environment with other participants. Recently, the concept of interactive teaching methods has been used as a synonym for active teaching methods (Veysova, 2007, p. 72). By active teaching methods, we mean a set of methods that enhance the learners' awareness, their cognitive independence, intellectual activity, and creativity. The concept of active teaching methods began to be developed in the late 20th century (from the 1980s) (Karimov, 2007, pp. 198–202). Active teaching methods have the following specific characteristics:

- The creation of a problem situation in a cognitive manner by the instructor, that is, consciously.
- Stimulating the active research positions of students in the process of solving a problematic issue.
- Creating an appropriate environment for students to independently discover and internalize the necessary and essential knowledge.

- The dual, subject-subject nature of the teaching process.
- The active learning stance of the students. Their independence and freedom of thought.
- The active participation of the lesson participants throughout the class.
- The creation of a problem-based situation at the beginning of the lesson and the direction of the lesson towards solving the problem.
- Directing students to discover new knowledge through thought-provoking and guiding questions.
- Conducting the teaching process through research methods.
- Organizing lessons in the form of dialogue and establishing feedback.
- Collaboration and mutual interaction within the group.
- Creatively applying knowledge to achieve the set goals.

As mentioned, role-playing games, various types of didactic exercises, writing essays, completing test tasks, discussions, debates, and so on are considered active methods. The concept of “interactive” is explained in translation from English as the idea of mutual understanding (Pasayev & Rustamov, 2007, p. 152). In the teaching of history, by interactive teaching, we refer to the learning connections and collaboration that emerge between students during the teaching process, teamwork, and the unity of teachers and students. When we talk about interactive methods, we refer to techniques that enable students to acquire skills and qualities during the learning process. Techniques such as brainstorming, problem-solving approaches, debates, decision trees, etc., are considered interactive methods (Karimov, 2007, p. 207).

The identification and implementation of interactive or active methods depend on the teacher's skill, expertise, professional level, and both theoretical and practical preparation. In the teaching process, the teacher may also incorporate methods derived from their personal experience into the range of interactive methods. Let's briefly explain some of the methods mentioned above:

Brainstorming

It is also referred to as mental assault. It is used to spark interest and enthusiasm for the new lesson, to clarify what students know well and what they don't know, and to stimulate their thinking. Brainstorming is a method widely applied for generating new ideas in solving scientific and practical problems. Its purpose is to organize collective

thinking activities to discover unconventional solutions to problems. This method helps students uncover new knowledge and generates interest in the issue being discussed. It stimulates them, encouraging quick and accurate responses to the given question, while simultaneously motivating them to propose new ideas. A question is presented to the students either orally or in writing. Each student expresses their opinion on the question, or more precisely, answers it based on what they know. The ideas shared by the students are written down. Afterward, discussions about the expressed ideas begin. The main ideas that emerge are summarized, the thoughts are analyzed and evaluated. In the end, the students choose the idea they deem appropriate for solving the discussed problem (Bolsonello et al., 2023).

The branching or clustering method

In this method, the teacher draws a circle on the board and asks the students to write words or phrases related to the topic being studied, regardless of their quality, in the center of the circle. The words mentioned by the students that are related to each other are connected with lines, and as a result, lines resembling a spider's web are formed on the board. Once the time is up, the resulting cluster is discussed. What is the purpose of applying this method? The main goal here is to encourage students to think openly and freely about the topic written on the board, to direct them to find as many words as possible related to the concept written in the center, to review the students' prior experiences regarding the written topic, to systematize their knowledge, and to broaden its scope (Wati et al., 2023)

Extraction of concepts

This is carried out in the form of a riddle-game, which simultaneously creates a high level of activity among students. Specifically, the teacher hangs one or more circular cards on the board, and the concept that will be presented to the students is written on the lower part of these cards. Then, the teacher shows the part of the card without writing and writes a few guiding words related to the characteristics of the hidden concept or concepts. After that, the students refer to the few words the teacher has mentioned about the concept and try to guess the hidden concept. If the teacher notices that the students are having difficulty guessing the hidden concept, they add a few more words. After the students express their thoughts about the hidden concept, the teacher informs them whether they have guessed the riddle correctly or not. The main objective of applying this concept is for students to independently derive new concepts. The independent extraction and assimilation of new concepts by students often requires considerable effort. This method ensures the extraction and deep understanding of the concept. In addition to creating activity among students, it helps in the formation of both logical and critical thinking.

It is more appropriate to apply this method during the motivation phase of an active interactive lesson.

Carousel method:

Before the lesson begins, the teacher writes topic-related questions on large sheets of paper and gives each group a separate sheet with a different question written on it. The group members read the questions one by one and write their answers. Then, the papers are passed on to other groups. Thus, with the teacher's assistance, the papers are passed in a clockwise direction to the groups. Once the papers with the questions have passed through all the groups, they return to their original group. After the teacher attaches those papers to the board, the questions are discussed with the participation of all students. This method is best implemented during the research phase of the lesson, as well as in the stage of drawing conclusions and generalizations. What is the purpose of applying this method? This method creates the opportunity to cover the topic interactively and comprehensively within a short period of time. It fosters the development of students' logical, critical, and independent thinking skills. This method enhances both individual and group responsibility. It also fosters interpersonal communication and a sense of mutual interaction within the groups. One of the most important conditions for applying this method is that the pre-determined questions must allow for a comprehensive exploration of the topic. Another crucial condition is that the teacher should not impose strict time limitations (Ardini et al., 2023; Owen & Thomas, 2021)

Know–Want to Know–Learned (KWL)” strategy

This strategy is implemented in several stages. Specifically: 1) The teacher announces the problem. 2) The teacher draws a three-column table on the board and writes the headings: “What I Know,” “What I Want to Know,” and “What I Learned” in the respective columns. 3) Students review the knowledge they have previously acquired and, in connection with the stated problem, share the information they know, which is then written in the first column. 4) Based on the stated problem, they identify the questions they want to ask, what they want to learn, or find answers to — these are recorded in the second column. After this, the teacher — or the students themselves in groups — reads the text and takes notes related to their prior knowledge about the topic. Once the reading is completed, the teacher returns to the questions listed in the second column. If the answers to these questions are found in the text, they are then recorded in the third column (Sari et al., 2023).

Here, students compare their prior knowledge with the newly acquired information and draw conclusions. In the KWL (Know–Want to know–Learned) method, the guiding questions are posed as follows: What do we know? What do we want to know? What have we learned? And what

do we still need to learn? This method not only enables students to establish a connection between their prior knowledge and newly acquired information but also encourages them to reflect on the problem at hand. It should be noted that, among the methods and technologies to be used in the process of teaching history, it is essential to apply techniques such as auctions, role-playing, debates, and others effectively at the appropriate time and context. Otherwise, it will not be possible to achieve the expected results (Alsalhi et al., 2023).

The Venn diagram method

This method is used to compare objects or events and identify their similarities and differences (Joaquin & Boyles, 2017). To use this method, the objects or events to be compared are first determined. Then, overlapping circles are drawn, leaving space in the center for writing. The events or objects to be compared are noted in the first and third circles. Then, students are instructed, meaning that the description of the compared objects is provided: the different characteristics are written on the right and left sides, while the similar characteristics are written in the overlapping area. Afterward, the thoughts are compared and generalized.

Thus, summarizing our thoughts, we can say that the implementation of active and interactive teaching methods is at the forefront of the educational reforms carried out in Azerbaijan. Accordingly, on June 15, 1999, the Presidential Decree No. 168 on "Approval of the Reform Program in the Education Sector of the Republic of Azerbaijan" was adopted. The adopted Decree outlines the purpose and principles of the reform, its stages, and key directions, justifying the implementation of the reform. It analyzes the current state of the education system in our republic, presents statistical data on the education system, outlines the normative legal framework, instructions, and regulations, discusses the current issues in education, and analyzes the shortcomings in the structure, content, personnel provision, information, teaching, and scientific-methodological support, management, material and technical base, and other areas of the education system.

The active/interdisciplinary teaching method plays a crucial role in increasing students' success and achievements in the field of education. Interactive methods, ICT, and other technological tools play a significant role in improving the quality of teaching. The integration of ICT into the educational process enables the implementation of various lesson formats and the creation of pedagogical conditions. It is not correct to equate teaching tools with technical tools. This is because visual aids have an informational character (Abbasov et al., 2019, p. 101). Technical tools, on the other hand, are more dynamic and more visual than visual aids.

One of the effective pedagogical teaching tools is educational films. Educational films not only enhance students' attention but also strengthen the visual aspect, allowing for the explanation of events, which, in turn, enables students to follow the events closely. Educational films are also of great importance in the teaching and upbringing of students. The use of educational films requires high pedagogical skill and expertise from the teacher. A teacher's full preparation for the lesson and their ability to utilize educational films at the appropriate time help students express their thoughts more clearly when explaining certain events. In addition, educational films help develop practical skills in students. Thus, the dynamic nature of technical teaching tools, which can carry and transmit a significant amount of information, allows them to complement other visual aids. In this regard, technical teaching tools play an irreplaceable role in the educational and pedagogical work in secondary and higher education institutions.

For the effective use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in pedagogical work, the teacher must have a good understanding of the various forms of ICT, be proficient in using computers, and be able to properly utilize the capabilities of slides related to education. In addition to all this, national and universal values should also be reflected in the teaching process. The teacher must make every effort to ensure that in the teaching process, students develop not only research and creativity skills but also the ability to independently apply the acquired knowledge in practice. Adhering to all these principles ensures the development of intellectual thinking, which is considered one of the competencies in the educational reforms. The term "competence" is derived from Latin, and it refers to a set of abilities, responsibilities, knowledge, and skills that enable an individual (student) to act effectively in a given context, such as in work or school.

The use of information technologies in the teaching process provides the teacher with numerous opportunities, such as organizing students' conscious activities during the teaching and upbringing process, applying individualized approaches in the teaching process, and more (Abbasov et al., 2019, p. 102). In the teaching of history, students should be provided with comprehensive knowledge. Skills and habits must be developed in them, and they should be raised as individuals with high moral qualities and a well-rounded worldview. When teaching is organized in this way, students develop a sense of self-confidence. This, in turn, creates an environment where they can actively participate in the lesson and express their thoughts independently.

CONCLUSIONS

In this research, we demonstrate that teaching methods fall into three main categories: organization and implementation of teaching activities; monitoring of instructional

and cognitive processes; and stimulation of participation and motivation. The key distinction between methods (overall strategies) and techniques (concrete steps) for their effective implementation has been highlighted. The analysis identified passive, active, interactive, and heuristic approaches and revealed that active and interactive methods enhance history students' autonomy, critical thinking, and creativity. We also confirmed that the modernization of practices, promoted by the 1999 Education Reform Decree, favors the adoption of pedagogical technologies—films, e-learning platforms, simulations, and adaptive systems—provided they are carefully aligned with didactic objectives and national values. For a better teaching process, we advocate for professors' training in the design and management of interactive activities that coherently integrate ICT tools, assuming the role of guides, designers, and facilitators of learning. We also emphasized strengthening formative assessment mechanisms—self- and peer-assessment—and collaborative dynamics—debates, team projects, KWL methodologies, and brainstorming—to optimize the retention and application of historical knowledge. The main result is that a balanced combination of traditional and innovative methods, supported by the professional training of teachers, is essential to raising the quality of history teaching in the Azerbaijani context.

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