

Original Research Article

Training Teaching Skills for Students Majoring in Primary Education: Theoretical Approach from the Blended Teaching Model

Nguyen Van Hung^{1*}

¹VNU University of Education

Article History

Received: 18.05.2025

Accepted: 23.06.2025

Published: 25.06.2025

Journal homepage:

<https://www.easpublisher.com>

Quick Response Code



Abstract: Training teaching skills for students majoring in Primary Education is an inevitable requirement in teacher training today, especially in the context of innovation in general education programs and digital transformation of education. This article aims to systematize the theoretical basis of teaching skills and forms of training skills for primary school teacher students, and analyze the possibility of applying blended learning in the training process. Through analyzing modern educational perspectives, characteristics of teacher students, and skill training models, the article clarifies the role, content and methods of organizing teaching skills training activities according to a flexible and integrated approach. Based on an overview of a number of domestic and foreign research works, the article also points out research gaps and proposes approaches to improve the effectiveness of primary school teacher training in the current period.

Keywords: Teaching Skills, Primary School Teachers, Pedagogical Students, Blended Learning, Teacher Training.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Primary education plays a fundamental role in the national education system. In the context of globalization and digital transformation, the need to improve the quality of primary school teachers is becoming increasingly urgent. One of the core factors determining the quality of teachers is teaching skills - a set of necessary competencies to effectively organize the educational process in the classroom.

In recent years, blended learning – a combination of face-to-face and online learning – has increasingly been used in teacher training. This format facilitates time and space, increases access to materials, and provides flexible feedback from instructors.

However, the organization of teaching skills training activities for students still has many shortcomings such as lack of systematization, not effectively exploiting new learning models such as blended learning. This article aims to systematize the theoretical basis of teaching skills, analyze the possibility of applying blended learning and suggest future research directions in primary school teacher training.

2. RESEARCH RESULTS

2.1. Skills Perspective, Teaching Skills

Skill is a central concept in many sciences, approached from many different perspectives. According to Thai Duy Tuyen (1999), skill is "the application of knowledge in activities", including both intellectual and practical operations. L.D. Levitov defines skill as "the successful implementation of a complex action or activity by choosing and applying the right method in specific conditions", while AU Petrovsky emphasizes the choice of a way of action appropriate to the goal. The Dictionary of Psychology (Vu Dung, 2008), the Dictionary of Education (Bui Hien, 2001) and the works of Attewell (1990), KK Platonov (1977) also emphasize that skill is the ability to successfully perform an action through the mobilization of knowledge, experience and the ability to consciously control behavior.

From the above perspectives, we can see two main trends in the approach to the concept of skills: (1) skills as the technical aspect of action - emphasizing proficiency, accuracy and repetition; and (2) skills as a manifestation of human capacity - emphasizing adaptability, creativity and efficiency in specific conditions. In education, skills are mainly understood in the second direction, because they are closely linked to the proactive, self-regulating and interactive roles of

learners and teachers in a complex educational environment.

Teaching skills are a set of basic and typical pedagogical operations that allow teachers to organize, manage, and adjust the teaching and learning process effectively and in accordance with educational goals. According to Shavelson (1973), the core of teaching skills is the ability to make timely decisions in specific pedagogical situations. Azhigulova & Kalmyrzaeva (2022) define teaching skills as the sum of knowledge, skills, and general abilities necessary to perform pedagogical tasks according to professional standards. Teaching skills include skills in designing lessons, organizing learning activities, interacting with students, and skills in evaluating, responding, and handling situations.

In the framework of this article, teaching skills are understood as the ability to organize teaching activities effectively, demonstrated through the ability to apply pedagogical knowledge into teaching practice through conscious, flexible actions that are appropriate to the context of modern primary education. This is not only a factor that ensures training quality but also a criterion that demonstrates the professional level and continuous professional development of teachers in the digital transformation era.

2.2. Characteristics of Teaching Skills

Teaching skills are a system of organized professional actions, formed through training, experience accumulation and reflection. It demonstrates the ability to apply pedagogical knowledge, professional skills and personal qualities to organize teaching activities effectively and consciously. This is not a random action but the result of a process of goal-oriented behavioral control, based on the thinking, emotions and professional will of the teacher.

According to Dang Thanh Hung (2010a), teaching skills are systematic, integrated and continuously developing. They not only reflect professional qualifications but also demonstrate the personal professional style and social role of the teacher. Teaching skills are also multi-layered, both as a practical tool and as a factor shaping the identity of the teaching profession - combining science, art and social responsibility.

In addition to being purposeful, teaching skills are also characterized by flexibility, efficiency, self-regulation, and multi-disciplinary integration (management, organization, communication, technology, etc.). Therefore, teaching skills are not just a set of discrete actions but a unified whole that comprehensively reflects the professional competence of teachers.

2.3. Structure and Classification of Teaching Skills

The structure of teaching skills is not simply a series of technical operations but a system of organized, sequential actions controlled by professional consciousness. According to Dang Thanh Hung (2010a), a complete teaching skill includes four basic elements:

(1) *Flexible Organized System of Operations:*

Each teaching skill is made up of a minimum set of operations or techniques, such as lesson design skills will include the operations: determining goals, analyzing content, choosing methods, designing activities, using learning materials and evaluating.

(2) *Logical Sequence of the Implementation Process:*

Operations must be arranged in a certain order, ensuring rationality, efficiency and suitability to the teaching context. Changes in sequence may occur depending on the situation, but still follow the established professional logic.

(3) *Action Adjustment Processes:*

All teaching skills involve information processing, feedback and behavior adjustment during implementation, expressed in the ability to evaluate, reflect and correct errors. This is the factor that distinguishes skills from habits or mechanical techniques.

(4) *Pace of Execution and Time Structure:*

Each skill needs to be performed within a certain time limit to ensure practical effectiveness. If the action is too slow or unreasonable in terms of time, the skill is not considered complete.

Thus, teaching skills are a complex process of action, requiring not only proficient manipulation but also understanding, self-regulation and flexible adaptation. This is the foundation for teachers to develop professional capacity in the educational environment.

The classification of teaching skills is approached from many perspectives: according to the structure of pedagogical activities, according to professional tasks, according to teaching stages, or based on the teacher competency framework. Some international scholars such as OV Ap-dul-lina and AV Petro-xki approach teaching skills according to groups of tasks, in which Petro-xki divides skills into four groups: information skills, motivational skills, development skills and orientation skills. However, these classifications do not fully reflect the characteristics of the profession in the context of modern education (Phan Thanh Long, 2004).

In Vietnam, many works propose to classify skills according to teaching stages into three main groups: (1) lesson preparation skills (design, develop learning materials); (2) lesson organization and implementation skills (classroom management, pedagogical communication); (3) assessment and feedback skills. At the same time, skills can be

distinguished by nature: hard skills (using technology, tools) and soft skills (communication, handling situations).

Based on the teacher competency framework (UNESCO, n.d.; Hiep, 2023), teaching skills are identified in relation to four groups of competencies: professional knowledge, teaching design and organization, communication - collaboration, and personal development. Each competency is accompanied by specific component skills, helping teachers have a clear development path.

Notably, author Dang Thanh Hung (2010b) proposed a system of 4 groups of basic teaching skills associated with pedagogical tasks: (1) skills in researching learners; (2) skills in leading and managing the classroom; (3) skills in designing lessons and learning environments; (4) skills in direct operation. This classification helps to identify skills in both breadth (diverse tasks) and depth (level of specialization).

In this paper, we focus on three core skills that can be effectively trained through the blended learning model: (1) lesson design skills; (2) skills in using information technology in teaching; and (3) pedagogical communication skills. These are universal skills, suitable for the specific characteristics of primary school teacher training in the context of digital transformation in education.

2.4. Criteria for Evaluating Teaching Skills

The assessment of teaching skills should be based on clear criteria that reflect the level of proficiency and effectiveness of pedagogical actions. According to Platonov & Golubev, skills can be assessed through five levels of development: from the beginning (newly formed operations) to proficiency and flexibility (creative application in complex situations). This approach is suitable for the training process according to a series of activities that increase in complexity.

Author Dang Thanh Hung (2010a) proposed five criteria for evaluating skills including: (1) completeness of content and structure; (2) logical rationality; (3) proficiency level; (4) flexibility level; and (5) effectiveness of skills in actual teaching. These criteria accurately reflect the complex and dynamic nature of pedagogical skills.

Another approach is to assess by specific skill groups, as in Apdulina and Petroski, or based on teacher professional standards. According to Circular 20/2018/TT-BGDDT, teaching skills are assessed through many criteria, notably: lesson planning, organizing learning activities, testing and evaluation, and applying information technology in teaching.

Despite different approaches, the criteria are consistent in emphasizing the systematic nature,

proficiency level and practical effectiveness of skills. Determining the correct criteria not only helps quantify the skill level of pedagogical students but also contributes to adjusting training activities, ensuring the output requirements of teacher training programs.

2.5. Research on Blended Learning

Blended learning is a pedagogical model that integrates face-to-face teaching and online learning, aiming to take advantage of the advantages of both forms to improve the quality and effectiveness of learning. According to Dziuban, Hartman & Moskal (2004), this is a form of learning that enhances the ability to personalize content and learning methods. Graham (2006) established three core components of blended learning: face-to-face learning, online learning, and the flexible integration between them to optimize the learning experience.

The term "blended" here does not only mean the combination of technological tools, but also includes the connection between teaching methods such as traditional lectures, experiential learning, project-based learning, group discussions, with the support of modern educational technology. From a theoretical perspective, Blended Learning demonstrates high flexibility, adaptability and personalization - allowing the adjustment of the approach to learning content according to the ability, style and learning conditions of each individual.

According to Picciano, the essence of blended learning is reflected in six constituent elements: (1) academic content; (2) social-emotional and cognitive elements; (3) discussion and critical thinking; (4) feedback - self-assessment; (5) group collaboration; and (6) formative assessment. Similarly, Carman (2005) identified five essential components: synchronous activities, asynchronous activities, collaborative learning, assessment and supporting learning materials. These structures clearly reflect the pedagogical characteristics of the model: multidimensionality, integration and competency orientation.

Blended learning models are implemented in a variety of approaches, depending on the ratio of face-to-face to online learning time, the level of technology application, as well as learner characteristics and training objectives. In Victoria L. Tinio's (2003) study, six common models of blended learning are classified as follows:

Face-to-Face Driver Model:

Learning activities take place mainly in traditional classrooms, combined with the use of technological tools such as electronic documents and lecture videos.

Rotation Model:

Students rotate between in-person and online learning as planned. Variations include Station Rotation, Flipped Classroom, and Individual Rotation.

Flex Model:

Students actively learn on a digital platform, with teacher support when needed. This model creates high conditions for personalization.

Online Lab Model: The entire learning process is conducted in a dedicated computer lab, with online learning resources.

Self-Blend Model: Students take additional online courses to enhance their knowledge in addition to the main classroom.

Online Driver Model:

Learning entirely on a digital platform, teachers and students interact through an online environment without the need for a physical classroom.

Additionally, some other classifications divide blended learning models into levels of technology application, from simple ones such as using email, learning management systems (LMS), to more complex ones such as video conferencing, simulations, and synchronous/asynchronous interactions.

These models provide learners and teachers with flexibility in organizing space, time and learning content. Choosing the appropriate model should be based on the characteristics of learners, training objectives and technological conditions of the educational institution.

2.6. Advantages of Blended Learning in Training Teaching Skills for Primary Education Students

Blended Learning is increasingly asserting its superiority in primary school teacher training, especially in training teaching skills. Many studies (Voogt *et al.*, 2013; Picciano, 2014) show that this model not only enhances interaction and supports personalized learning paths, but also creates a flexible environment that adapts to the real needs of pedagogical students.

First, Blended Learning personalizes the learning process, allowing students to proactively adjust their progress, access learning content, and complete learning tasks anytime, anywhere. This creates favorable conditions for students to have time to practice, consolidate skills, and develop teaching capacity in a sustainable way.

Second, this model enhances teaching practice, through activities such as simulation teaching, video lecture analysis, and feedback from lecturers and peers. These are simulation experiences close to real classroom practice, helping students improve their skills in handling

pedagogical situations and organizing effective learning activities.

Third, Blended Learning develops technology application skills - an essential requirement in modern education. According to Nguyen *et al.*, (2020), future teachers need to be proficient in educational technology tools such as Google Classroom, Moodle, or interactive applications such as Kahoot!, Quizizz... Regular use of these tools during the learning process contributes to forming digital pedagogical habits and competencies for students.

Fourth, the hybrid model optimizes training time and costs, by minimizing traditional cost factors (travel, printing, classroom organization), while helping lecturers and students use time more effectively in learning - teaching and feedback.

Finally, Blended Learning contributes to the development of collaboration and communication skills, thanks to the system of forums, online discussion groups and group learning projects. These are important factors for students to develop the ability to collaborate - an important element in the professional competence of primary school teachers.

Thus, blended learning is not only a solution to cope with the digital transformation context, but also an effective pedagogical method to organize teaching skills training activities for pedagogical students in a flexible, personalized and modern direction.

3. CONCLUSION

Training teaching skills for students majoring in Primary Education is a key task in teacher training, especially in the context of strong educational innovation and digital transformation. From an overview of the theoretical basis, the article has clarified the concept, characteristics, structure, classification and criteria for evaluating teaching skills, and pointed out the core skills that need to be trained for primary education students. This is an important basis for orienting the organization of training activities in a systematic, effective and professional manner.

In addition, the article also analyzes the nature, structure and models of blended learning - a modern pedagogical trend that can improve the quality of teacher training. Blended learning creates favorable conditions for students to be trained in a diverse and flexible learning environment, developing self-study ability, critical thinking and skills in using educational technology - essential factors in the modern teaching profession. On that basis, further research needs to focus on practical surveys, developing specific training models and verifying them with reliable scientific tools. These efforts will contribute practically to improving the quality of primary school teachers - the fundamental

force in the sustainable development of the Vietnamese education system.

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Cite This Article: Nguyen Van Hung (2025). Training Teaching Skills for Students Majoring in Primary Education: Theoretical Approach from the Blended Teaching Model. *East African Scholars J Edu Humanit Lit*, 8(6), 245-249.
