Historical education at the university: challenges and development prospects

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Abstract. The article summarizes and systematizes information on the problems of implementation of historical education at universities of the Russian Federation at the present stage. The review is based on several source groups, namely, the federal regulatory framework, research and practice on the implementation of various pedagogical technologies in the educational process, and innovative forms of education, as well as the works of specialists – history teachers at universities and senior school. The article identifies the problems in the system of training of students majoring in history that need to be solved. This concerns the need for specialized educational and methodological literature on historical issues taking into account compliance with today’s requirements; creating an All-Russian community of history teachers to support and accompany them in the educational process; forming a specialized Internet resource with meaningful and constantly updated content in the field of historical science and education, etc. The article presents the intermediate results of testing various educational technologies (interactive, dialog-based, problem-based learning technologies, and project activity technologies) and the practices of implementing relevant educational publications of the Transbaikal State University in teaching the discipline “History of Russia”. It is emphasized that the introduction of new materials into scientific circulation and the subsequent presentation of the results of the implementation of modern educational technologies at Russian universities will allow further adjusting the development trajectory of Russian historical education.

Keywords: the concept of teaching history, traditional and innovative teaching, pedagogical technologies.

1 Introduction

Reforming the system of general and vocational education, associated with the approval of new educational standards (FSES), changes in the system of historical education (Historical and cultural standard), as well as the introduction of professional standards have made significant changes in the work system of not only school teachers but also university lecturers. The active implementation of competence-based, personality-oriented, and system-activity approaches into the teaching practice has led to the need to change all training courses in higher education curricula. From a means of acquiring knowledge, it has become a way of...

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humanizing human relations, being at the same time a condition for familiarizing with the world and national culture, and a method of forming the personality of the young generation. The modernization of Russian education in the context of higher education has also provided for an increase in the scope of independent work of students, strengthening its role in the educational process of the university. Students should master the appropriate competencies, and first of all, they should master the set of systematized knowledge in the course of independent work. This, in turn, encouraged the professional community of university teachers searching for new forms of work, using various pedagogical technologies to achieve learning outcomes within the requirements of the standards.

The problems of identifying and applying the most effective technologies in the higher education system for forming and developing universal, general professional, and professional (subject) competencies, as well as the issues of developing civic consciousness and upbringing students, are constantly being studied in the scientific and methodological literature. Numerous articles in scientific journals, proceedings of scientific and practical conferences, as well as methodological rationales of both individual scientists and research teams from various Russian universities, deal with these problems. Besides, one can note the growing interest in the implementation of historical education in terms of generalization and systematization of the accumulated work experience. In recent years, conferences in this area have been actively held in various regions of Russia [1–5], covering various aspects of the concerned issue – from the analysis of regulatory documentation to the use of certain technologies or innovative forms of classes and organizing extracurricular activities. A huge number of works are devoted to the study of regulatory documents related to historical education, the problems of historical knowledge falsification, and other issues of the university and school history course (and often these problems have similar reasons) [6–16].

An individual group of publications can be distinguished from the perspective of presenting the experience of successful organization of the classroom and independent work of students, effective pedagogical technologies used in general in the system of higher humanitarian education, and in particular, in the implementation of historical education.

All publications of recent years in this area can be grouped as follows:

- research and practices of various pedagogical technologies that are relevant for universities, aimed at improving the quality of higher education and achieving significant results in forming general competencies, presented in the methodological rationales on pedagogy in senior school, performed by N.V. Bordovskaya [17], P.I. Obraztsov [18], S.Yu. Popova [19], L.A. Turik [20], L.A. Yadvrishisa [21], and others.
- research and practices of innovative forms of teaching in pedagogical education, presented in the works of O.V. Kitikar [22] and N.Yu. Filimonova [23]; it is important to note that this research area is presented also by the works of scientists and methodologists of the Transbaikal State University, namely, T.V. Bezrodnykh [24] and A.S. Nefedova [25].
- the works of specialists teaching history at universities and senior school, namely, M.T. Studenikin [26], E.E. Vyazemsky, A.N. Ioffe, Yu.A. Nikiforov, et al. [27], A.V. Volochaeva [28], I.V. Yablochkin [29], A.Yu. Suslov [30], D.V. Shchukin [31], and others, as well as the works of researchers focusing on improving the educational potential of the history course, subject olympiad movement, etc. [32, 33].

Thus, the problems of teaching according to higher education programs, in particular, in historical disciplines, are relevant among the scientific and pedagogical community that is reflected in various publications. According to the authors of the study, currently, there is no enough comprehensive research that would systematize the theory and practice of receiving historical education at the university. The present article is aimed at partly solving this problem.
2 Methods

The methods of analysis, generalization, and systematization of theoretical and methodological works of specialists in the field of higher pedagogical education and historical education, in particular, were used in this study. The methods of comparing the all-Russian level regulatory documentation and local acts of the Transbaikal State University were used.

The following federal level documents were analyzed: the FSES HE – bachelor’s degree in the field of training 44.03.01 “Pedagogical Education”, approved by the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of 22.02.2018, No. 121, [34], the Order of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Russian Federation “On approval of the professional standard “Teacher (pedagogical activity in the field of preschool, primary general, basic general, secondary general education) (educator, teacher)” of 18.10.2013, No. 544n, as well as the Historical and Cultural Standard for Russian history, approved by the All-Russian Association of History and Social Studies Teachers in 2014 (the Collegium of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation had approved the “Concept of teaching Russian history in educational organizations implementing basic educational programs” on 23.10.2020 [35]).

The studied documents of the Transbaikal State University included “The main professional educational program of higher education of the Transbaikal State University 44.03.01 “Pedagogical education”, the profile “Historical education” [36], methodological instructions (MI) “Using interactive forms of learning in the educational process of the university” [37] and “Using cases in the educational process”.

Besides the theoretical methods of research, this article demonstrated in-house experience in implementing the historical education program under the bachelor’s degree curricula 44.03.01 “Pedagogical education”, as well as analyzed the results of practical and experimental testing of teaching aids in historical disciplines (as exemplified by the study guide “History of Russia: 9th–16th centuries” [38]).

3 Results

In the course of studying the regulatory documents and scientific and methodological literature, the authors have concluded that the implementation of historical education at the university requires focused attention from the state authorities in terms of support and recommendations for using in the educational process of professionally prepared textbooks in various areas of historical science, as well as combating falsifications in history. Secondly, to discuss the controversial aspects of the content of university work programs on history, and organization of an effective learning process, it is necessary to unite the teaching community. For example, the corresponding structure, such as the Interuniversity Center for Historical Education, already exists for organizing teaching history in Russian technical universities. The authors believe that such an organization or center is also necessary for universities that implement educational programs in the areas of teacher education (in a major “Historical education”, “History and social studies”, etc.). Besides, this structure will allow creating the basis for cooperation between teachers and students from different regions, for example, when implementing the project and research activities.

The analysis of regulatory documentation and contemporary literature has allowed concluding that the need to use new technologies in the history teaching process is of particular relevance at the present stage. In most universities, attention is drawn to the need for changes in traditional forms of work due to both the requirements of new standards and reduction in the teaching load. Technologies, frequently mentioned and successfully implemented in higher education in Russia, include interactive, dialogic, and problem-based
learning, as well as related to game and project activity, and case technologies. These technologies can be used both in the context of the traditional lecture and seminar course, as well as in the independent extracurricular work of students. The experience of the Bryansk State University, presented in the work of Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences L.A. Yadvirshis, has shown that the performance of creative works based on the use of dialogue technologies contributed to forming in students competencies for comprehensive analysis of the problem under discussion, performing experimental activities, processing, analyzing, systematizing, and interpreting the results of educational and pedagogical activities, solving pedagogical problems, which objectively increased their professional competence [21: 251–252]. At that, seminars and discussions, analysis of specific situations, problem and search dialogues, and heuristic conversations were noted as the most effective forms of learning [39–42].

In recent years, the Transbaikal State University has approved and implemented a set of methodological recommendations, in which a large place is given to innovative forms of organizing the educational process. When implementing historical education programs, teachers use a variety of work forms. For example, the textbook “History of Russia (9th-16th centuries)” draws attention to the use of innovative forms in the classroom teaching (round tables and debates); essays, frameworks, etc. are most useful when performing written tasks [38]. New forms of work, such as historical projects, are used in the course of the history of Russia and in the course of subsequent semesters.

Based on the results of monitoring students’ work, it can be noted that students prepare for certain types of work (round table or project defense) more carefully than for a regular seminar class. This is reflected in the level of the event and the number of those wishing to present their personal standpoint (usually all group students are involved). Even in the context of distance learning, caused by the current situation of the pandemic, certain innovative forms are being tested successfully. By experimenting with different platforms and applications, students offer new forms that allow them to fully comply with the requirements and regulations of specific types of classes (for example, debates).

Note that using certain pedagogical technologies in the historical education practice at the university is also interdisciplinary. Thus, when developing a project on the history of Russia, students work in parallel according to the discipline “Fundamentals of organizing project and research activities in historical science and education”, observing the required rules and forms. The content of the project is aimed at issues of the history of Russia of the 17th-first half of the 19th centuries, but it is permissible to refer to regional history (close in terms of the historical period to the main historical course) studied by students in the framework of another academic discipline “History of Transbaikalia”. The authors believe that such an integrated interaction of teachers and students is promising in terms of developing the professional competencies of students and achieving high results both at the intermediate certification and in further training at the faculty.

Despite the high efficiency of innovative forms of education, it should be noted that for the successful organization of student’s independent work, it is also necessary to apply traditional work elements, such as analyzing written historical sources, working with historical maps, and conceptual apparatus employing cognitive and training tasks. Some forms of independent work of students, such as the analysis of written sources, are also mastered in practical classes in history. Most of the issues of the seminar classes are initially focused on analyzing chronicle and legislative sources of Russia (for example, the topic “The personality and activities of Yaroslav the Wise according to the “Tale of Bygone Years” or “The servile population in the Russian state of the 14th-16th centuries according to legislative sources and records”). These forms of work have proven their efficiency in conducting final review works in the disciplines, as well as gave good results in the All-Russian testing of students according to higher education programs.
The study of scientific and methodological literature and the systematization of effective methods and technologies allow emphasizing the importance of education and research work with students. Similar to the integrated implementation of general education programs and supplementary education programs indicated by FSES for school education, experts in higher historical education note the importance of extracurricular work with students by involving them in the subject olympiad movement, social and pedagogical projecting, and research activities.

Transbaikal State University annually holds student scientific and practical conferences (“Youth Scientific Spring”, and “Science Festival”), publishes collections of student articles (“Youth Scientific Spring”, and “Student Readings”), holds intra- and interfaculty subject olympiads on various historical topics (the history of the First World War, the Great Patriotic War, the Decembrist movement, the history of Transbaikalia, etc.), implements youth (student) projects and grants (Transbaikal State University Grant, Competition of student scientific associations), professional skills competitions (Competition of pedagogical skills, WorldSkills), and much more.

4 Conclusion

The study of the legal and regulatory framework and experience in implementing historical education in higher educational institutions of Russia at the present stage has allowed identifying certain urgent problems that require an immediate solution. This concerns the preparation of high-quality specialized educational and methodological literature on historical issues, taking into account compliance with the requirements of FSES, as well as addressing issues of history falsification (for example, creating a kind of federal list of recommended educational publications for universities). This involves also creating the All-Russian scientific and methodological center or association of history teachers to support and accompany the university teaching community in the educational process in the context of transiting to distance learning and other forms of education, meeting the need to share experience in implementing contemporary educational technologies; creating a specialized Internet resource with meaningful and constantly updated content in the field of historical science and education, etc. The experience in teaching historical subjects (including at the Transbaikal State University) taking into account contemporary requirements, accumulated in the Russian higher school and presented in this study, will certainly be useful when implementing educational programs of historical education. Introduction of new materials into scientific circulation and the subsequent presentation of the results of implemented modern educational technologies at Russian universities will allow further adjusting the development trajectory of the Russian historical education, taking into account the requirements of the time.

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