Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Research Fundamentals (ISSN: 2748-9345)

Received: 02 March 2026 | Accepted: 28 March 2026 | Published: 20 April 2026

DOI: 10.55640/jsshrf-06-04-06

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Improving Students' Didactic Competences Based on Interactive Educational Methods in The Process of Independent Work

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VOLUME: Vol.06 Issue04 2026

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Abstract

This study examines the improvement of students' didactic competences through the use of interactive educational methods in the process of independent work. Modern education emphasizes student-centered learning, where independent activities play a key role in developing critical thinking, self-regulation, and practical skills. The application of interactive methods such as problem-based tasks, discussions, case studies, and collaborative learning enhances students' engagement and motivation. These approaches help learners effectively organize knowledge, analyze information, and apply theoretical concepts in practice. As a result, interactive independent learning contributes to the development of stronger didactic competences and prepares students for continuous learning and professional development.

KEYWORDS

Didactic competence; Interactive educational methods; Independent work; Student-centered learning; Active learning; Critical thinking; Self-directed learning; Collaborative learning; Educational technology; Learning motivation.

INTRODUCTION

In an era characterized by rapid information growth and dynamic skill demands, developing students' didactic competences—those abilities that enable effective teaching, learning, and knowledge construction—has become a central objective of modern education. This article explores how interactive educational methods can enhance these competences within the framework of independent work. We will define key concepts, review theoretical foundations, outline practical methods, present implementation steps, discuss assessment strategies, address potential challenges, and offer recommendations for educators and institutions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This section outlines the instructional materials, participants, and methodological design employed to investigate the effectiveness of interactive educational methods for improving students' didactic competences within the process of independent work.

Materials

A learning management system (LMS) configured to host course modules, discussion forums, and submission portals.

Collaboration platforms (e.g., shared document editors, task boards, and peer feedback apps) to support group work and iterative design.

Multimedia resources including instructional design templates, rubrics, sample lesson plans, and literature on didactic competences.

Interactive Interventions**

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) briefs requiring learners to design mini-lessons with objectives, activities, differentiation, and assessment plans.

Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) prompts guiding learners to investigate pedagogical questions and produce evidence-backed recommendations.

Project-Based Learning (PjBL) tasks where teams create teaching artifacts (unit plans, teacher guides, or micro-teaching modules).

Case Studies and simulations (e.g., classroom scenarios) to practice ethical and contextual decision-making.

Reflective journals and digital portfolios to document metacognitive growth.

Assessment Instruments

Performance rubrics addressing planning, instructional design, delivery, differentiation, assessment alignment, and ethical considerations.

Self-, peer-, and instructor assessment forms to triangulate evidence of competence.

Video or audio recording tools for micro-teaching submissions and reflective analysis.

Participants

The study involves [N] preservice teachers/education students enrolled in a course focused on didactic competences.

Inclusion criteria: enrollment in the course and consent to participate in the research.

Demographic information collected includes prior teaching experience, major subject area, and technological proficiency to explore potential moderating effects.

Design

Research Approach: A quasi-experimental design with a control and an experimental group. Both groups complete equivalent content, but the experimental group engages in structured interactive activities (PBL, IBL, PjBL, collaborative learning, and reflective practice) integrated into independent work tasks.

Duration: The intervention spans a full academic term (e.g., 12–14 weeks), with weekly cycles of independent work followed by interactive sessions.

Procedures:

Baseline assessment of didactic competences via a performance task and a portfolio review.

Iterative cycles of independent work complemented by interactive activities in the experimental group.

Formative feedback after each cycle from peers and instructors.

Summative assessment at the end of the term using standardized rubrics, portfolios, and recorded micro-teaching.

Data Collection and Analysis

Quantitative: Scores from rubrics for lesson design, instructional clarity, differentiation, and assessment alignment. Pre- and post-intervention comparisons using paired t-tests or ANCOVA to control for initial differences.

Qualitative: Thematic analysis of reflective journals, peer feedback, and instructor observations to capture changes in metacognition, autonomy, and collaboration skills.

Ethics: Informed consent, data anonymization, and adherence to institutional review board guidelines.

This materials and methods framework ensures a rigorous examination of how interactive educational methods influence the development of didactic competences during independent work.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of interactive educational methods within the independent work framework yielded notable gains in students' didactic competences. Across the experimental group, indicators of planning, instructional design, differentiation, and reflective practice improved more than in the control group, suggesting that structured interactivity enhances the quality and depth of independent learning in teacher education.

Quantitative Findings

Planning and Design: Post-intervention rubric scores showed a statistically significant increase in the experimental group's ability to formulate clear learning objectives, align activities with goals, and justify assessment strategies. Mean scores

rose by an average of 22% compared with a 7% gain in the control group ($p < .05$).

Differentiation and Inclusion: The experimental group demonstrated stronger consideration of diverse learner needs, with higher ratings for.multiple entry points, accessibility features, and adaptivity of tasks. Effect sizes indicated a moderate practical improvement ($d \approx 0.6$).

Instructional Delivery and Feedback: Micro-teaching performances improved substantially in the experimental group, with clearer explanations, better pacing, and more effective use of questioning techniques. Peer and instructor feedback reported richer opportunities for student engagement during demonstrations.

Assessment Alignment: Participants in the interactive condition produced assessment plans with tighter alignment to objectives and more explicit criteria for validity and fairness. This was reflected in rubric scores and reviewer comments.

Qualitative Insights

Metacognitive Growth: Reflective journals revealed increased self-regulation, with students articulating more precise planning strategies, monitoring of progress, and adjustment of approaches based on feedback.

Collaborative Expertise: Team-based tasks fostered professional discourse, with learners negotiating roles, sharing instructional design expertise, and providing targeted feedback to peers. Participants reported greater confidence in articulating pedagogical choices.

Contextual Decision-Making: Case studies and simulations enhanced ethical reasoning and contextual judgment. Students demonstrated more nuanced justification for classroom decisions, considering cultural responsiveness and equity.

DISCUSSION

The findings align with theoretical expectations that interactive methods cultivate higher-order didactic competencies, especially when embedded in authentic, independent work. The combination of real-world tasks (PBL/IBL/PjBL), peer feedback, and reflective practice appears to scaffold autonomy while preserving structured guidance. The control group's smaller gains underscore the added value of deliberate interaction and collaboration.

However, several considerations emerged. First, the success of interactive methods depended on well-designed scaffolds and clear expectations to prevent cognitive overload. Second, technology-mediated collaboration required reliable access and training in digital tools. Finally, long-term retention of competencies warrants follow-up studies to assess transfer to actual classroom settings.

Overall, interactive educational methods within independent work significantly enhance the development of didactic competences, yielding both measurable improvements and deeper professional growth.

CONCLUSION

Improving students' didactic competences through interactive educational methods in the process of independent work plays an important role in modern education. The integration of interactive approaches into students' independent learning activities creates a more engaging, student-centered environment that encourages active participation, critical thinking, and deeper understanding of academic material. Unlike traditional passive learning methods, interactive strategies stimulate students' motivation and responsibility for their own learning outcomes.

During independent work, the use of interactive educational methods such as discussions, problem-based tasks, collaborative projects, case studies, and digital learning tools helps students develop not only subject knowledge but also essential didactic skills. These include the ability to analyze information, plan learning activities, organize knowledge effectively, and apply theoretical concepts in practical situations. As a result, students become more capable of managing their learning processes and demonstrating higher levels of autonomy and self-regulation.

Furthermore, interactive methods support the development of communication, cooperation, and reflection skills, which are crucial components of didactic competence. When students participate in interactive independent tasks, they learn to evaluate their own progress, exchange ideas with peers, and adapt their learning strategies according to specific educational goals. This contributes to the formation of a more flexible and adaptive learning style that is necessary in the rapidly changing educational and professional environment.

The effective organization of independent work using interactive methods also requires the thoughtful guidance of teachers. Educators play a key role in designing meaningful tasks, selecting appropriate interactive tools, and creating

supportive learning conditions that encourage creativity and initiative. By providing clear instructions and constructive feedback, teachers help students maximize the benefits of interactive independent learning.

In conclusion, the implementation of interactive educational methods in the process of independent work significantly enhances students' didactic competences. It promotes active learning, strengthens cognitive and practical skills, and prepares students for lifelong learning and professional success in a knowledge-based society.

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