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AN INTEGRATED PEDAGOGICAL SYSTEM OF CAREER GUIDANCE WITH STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the organization of career guidance and mentoring activities at the university level by presenting a holistic model of career guidance within the "school–university" system. It examines key areas of career development and describes both passive and active methods employed in the implementation of these activities.

The research is grounded in the principles of the system-activity approach and the competence-based approach. To achieve the study's objectives, both theoretical methods (analysis, synthesis, generalization, and systematization of scientific literature) and empirical methods (observation and surveys) were utilized.

The study presents an integrated pedagogical system for career guidance aimed at students across different educational levels. It outlines the main directions of career guidance activities through examples of initiatives implemented at the university level with both school-aged students and university students. The authors highlight the benefits of implementing such an integrated system, using the case of the Institute of Defectological Education and Rehabilitation at the Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia.

The findings emphasize that an integrated pedagogical system of career guidance is a critical component for a university's successful operation in a competitive educational landscape. A key feature of the proposed system is the continuity of career guidance ("school – university", "student – applicant – student – young specialist"), alongside targeted educational and professional orientation activities conducted for learners at various stages of education.

***Keywords**: career guidance, mentoring, school, college, university, schoolchild, student, teacher, lecturer, pedagogical competencies.*

INTRODUCTION

In the current educational landscape, career guidance plays a pivotal role in general education and represents a critical phase in preparing students for future academic and professional pathways (Kondratyeva & Kovaleva, 2024b). For institutions of higher education, career guidance is increasingly important, particularly as they seek innovative approaches to attract prospective students before and during the admissions process. The need to establish an integrated pedagogical system for career guidance across various levels of education—general education, secondary vocational education, and higher vocational education—arises from educational, demographic, psychological, and pedagogical considerations.

Career guidance activities are designed not only to attract future applicants but also to support the continuity between academic stages (i.e., school–university, school–secondary vocational education–university). This continuity is especially relevant in the context of pedagogical education, where there is an ongoing need to generate interest in the teaching profession and attract students to pedagogical universities (Cherevko, 2022; Litvinova, 2021).

Simultaneously, career guidance at the university level is directed toward students who have already chosen the teaching profession. The aim is to enrich their experience not only with theoretical and scientific knowledge in psychology and pedagogy but also with practical skills necessary for working with children from various nosological groups. This includes building the capacity to collaborate with educators, engage families, and foster inclusive environments (Kondratyeva & Kovaleva, 2024d).

The urgency of training highly qualified specialists in the field of defectology cannot be overstated. The system of psychological and pedagogical support for children—from early childhood to school age with developmental disabilities demands professionals who are capable of addressing both standard and complex professional challenges. These specialists must be equipped to ensure inclusive education and promote the social integration of individuals with disabilities (Kondratyeva & Kovaleva, 2024d).

Research on training speech therapy professionals underscores the importance of dual competencies: a deep theoretical and practical understanding of speech pathologies and a strong motivation for professional practice. A speech therapist must master specialized methods for addressing various speech disorders and be able to work effectively with individuals from diverse nosological groups. Furthermore, these professionals need to establish productive collaboration with educators, support personnel, interdisciplinary teams, and the families of students. As Tyurina, Ushakova, and Filatova (2024, p. 101) note, a competent speech therapist should be "motivated to perform professional duties, capable of social interaction, tolerant, and able to promote humane treatment of individuals with disabilities within the socio-

cultural environment."

Given these demands, the creation and implementation of structured career guidance programs in higher education are more relevant than ever. Such programs contribute not only to academic success but also to the holistic development of students into socially responsible and professionally competent individuals.

In the context of training future specialists in so-called "helping professions," curatorial work assumes a central role. This guidance supports the development of both professional and personal competencies, enhances students' motivation for academic and professional engagement, fosters a sense of social responsibility, and strengthens awareness of the societal importance of their chosen profession.

Thus, career guidance can be organized into two main areas:

Pre-admission career guidance, aimed at attracting students to higher education institutions.

Intra-university career development, focused on supporting students in developing professional competencies and personal qualities during their studies.

At the university level, career guidance with students across different educational stages is based on competence-based and system-activity approaches. This work is implemented as part of an integrated pedagogical model, through the following relational formats:

"School–university"

"Student–student"

"University teacher–student"

"Student–employer (e.g., speech therapist, teacher)"

RESULTS

A key component in the development of career guidance systems in higher education is the effective integration of mentoring models. These models support students across various educational stages—school, teacher training colleges, and universities—by addressing their academic, professional, and psychological needs (Nugumanova & Yakovenko, 2018).

Survey on Mentorship Needs

To explore student demand for mentorship, particularly in the context of career guidance, an online survey was conducted among students training to become speech therapy teachers. The sample included 93 female students aged 19–22, enrolled in the 2nd to 4th years at the Department of Speech Therapy, Institute of Defectological Education and Rehabilitation, A.I. Herzen Russian State Pedagogical University.

Students were asked three core questions:

Is mentorship important during university studies?

Do you experience academic or personal difficulties during your studies?

If so, what qualities should a mentor possess?

Key Findings

Mentorship Demand: 92 out of 93 students confirmed the importance of having a mentor during their university education, particularly in the context of career guidance.

Challenges Faced:

Difficulties reported: 64 students (≈69%) reported challenges, especially during the transition to the second year, coinciding with the start of specialized coursework in speech therapy.

Learning-related difficulties (41.9% of total responses): included increased academic workload, large volumes of theoretical material, memorization of technical terms, insufficient foundational knowledge in key school subjects, and requirements to study additional literature.

Psychological difficulties:

Time management (16.1%)

Uncertainty about career choice and adaptation to new groups (17.2%)

Emotional stress due to increased academic demands.

Mentor Qualities (as reported by students)

Quality % of Respondents

Empathy, responsiveness 62.3%

Professionalism 32.2%

Organizational skills 29.0%

Responsibility 19.3%

Respect for students 17.2%

Sociability 16.1%

Discipline 13.9%

Emotional balance 9.6%

These results highlight the central role of mentorship in the professional and personal development of university students and confirm that mentoring is integral to effective career guidance systems in higher education.

Mentoring as a Pedagogical Technology

In contemporary educational practice, mentoring is implemented through structured projects, programs, and institutional initiatives in academic, professional, and social spheres (Kondratieva &

Kovaleva, 2024a; Cherevko, 2022). It is both a method and a technology of:

Professional adaptation
Development of competencies
Motivation for career growth
Personal and social development

Mentoring is increasingly viewed as a bidirectional, mutually enriching process. It creates a supportive, individualized learning environment where both mentor and mentee benefit. This relationship is built on mutual respect, shared goals, long-term commitment, and trust.

Key Elements of Effective Mentoring

Mentor's Role: Possesses experience, knowledge, and professional expertise; actively transfers competencies; adapts mentoring to mentee's needs.

Mentee's Needs: Often surface during transitional or crisis phases in education or personal development; includes emotional, cognitive, and professional support.

Foundational Principles:
Voluntary participation
Role acceptance by both parties
Shared interests and emotional connection
Trust and mutual respect
Willingness for joint reflection and development
Mentoring Models
Multiple mentoring models are used in educational and professional contexts:
Maxwell's Models (2008):
Guru and Follower
Description: Mentee learns through observation without direct instruction.
Pros: Efficient for high-skill acquisition.
Cons: Limited feedback, passive learning.
Master and Apprentice
Description: Mentor actively instructs and involves the mentee.
Pros: High engagement, team integration.
Cons: May limit independent decision-making.

Creative Tandem

Description: Mentor and mentee collaborate as equals.

Pros: Promotes autonomy, innovation, and shared responsibility.

Contemporary Models (Gerasimova, Fetisov, Gorbunova):

Group mentoring – One mentor with several mentees

Partner mentoring – Peer-based collaboration

Traditional mentoring – One-on-one guidance over time

Flash mentoring – Brief, one-time professional exchanges

Regardless of the model, effective mentoring demands both subject-matter expertise and interpersonal effectiveness, especially in special education, where the mentor must translate complex pedagogical practices into accessible, real-world applications (Fetisov & Gorbunova, 2023).

Mentoring and Career Guidance in Defectological Education

In the training of defectologists—specialists in educating children with disabilities—mentoring is essential for ensuring quality and accessibility in education. Personnel preparedness is a decisive factor in the success of inclusive education systems (Solovyeva, 2020; Filatova, 2023). Effective mentoring supports:

The adaptation of novice professionals

Talent development in gifted children and adolescents

Support for students in vulnerable social situations

Transitions between educational levels (school–college–university)

The university teacher remains a central figure in shaping graduate competencies. To maintain this standard, teachers must pursue ongoing professional development, update their qualifications, and stay aligned with educational standards and labor market needs. Moreover, educators should clearly understand how their courses contribute to the formation of future teachers' competencies.

Mentoring in the Speech Therapy Profession

The role of a speech therapist teacher is highly demanding, requiring:

Profound psychological and pedagogical expertise

Specialized knowledge of speech development and pathology

Commitment, emotional resilience, and creativity

Given these challenges, early career orientation—starting at the school level—and targeted mentoring between universities and schools/colleges are crucial to attracting and preparing future professionals in this field.

Justification for an Integrated Career Guidance System

The creation of an integrated pedagogical system of career guidance across educational levels is necessitated by several interrelated factors:

Demographic: Declining student populations reduce competitiveness in admissions.

Psychological and Pedagogical: Adolescents often lack readiness to choose a profession, necessitating earlier and more structured interventions.

Educational: The modern curriculum must foster creativity, emotional intelligence, patriotism, and cultural awareness.

Career guidance, when properly organized, becomes a key determinant of a university's competitiveness and sustainability. The development and application of systematic and targeted methods ensure long-term success for both the institution and its students.

Summary of Career Guidance Directions

Career guidance in higher education comprises two main areas:

Pre-University Orientation: Activities aimed at attracting prospective applicants.

Intra-University Development: Professional and personal guidance for enrolled students as they acquire key competencies and prepare for employment.

METHODS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN INTEGRATED PEDAGOGICAL SYSTEM OF CAREER GUIDANCE

At the Department of Speech Therapy of the Institute of Defectological Education and Rehabilitation, A.I. Herzen Russian State Pedagogical University, a structured approach to career guidance is implemented based on agreements with educational organizations in St. Petersburg. These agreements are governed by institutional regulations on innovation and mentoring. A wide range of events and activities are designed to provide students with comprehensive information about the teaching profession, university admission opportunities, preparatory courses, and school Olympiads hosted by the university.

Passive and Active Methods of Career Guidance

The career guidance system employs both **passive** and **active methods**, each contributing uniquely to the integrated pedagogical approach (Kondratieva & Kovaleva, 2022).**Passive Methods**

These methods primarily involve the dissemination of information and initial exposure to teaching careers:

- **Conversations with applicants** about educational pathways, led by university faculty.
- **Participation in school events** by university staff.
- Development of **information stands, billboards, and printed materials** outlining university programs.
- Organization of **"Open Day"** events.

These engagements allow students to become familiar with the university environment and gain initial insights into the teaching profession.

Active Methods

Active approaches facilitate deeper involvement and experiential learning:

- **Involvement of school students in university student groups** and activities.
- **Production of promotional videos** highlighting academic programs and student life.
- **University faculty participation** in government training and retraining programs.
- **Faculty-led research initiatives** on relevant pedagogical, psychological, and managerial topics.
- **Professional weeks**, dedicated to specific faculties and specialties.
- **Organization of Olympiads** for diverse age groups, including schoolchildren.

These methods foster meaningful interaction between students and professionals, enhance communication skills, and create opportunities for early mentoring.

Career Guidance for University Students

Career guidance continues after enrollment. A survey of first-year students revealed a decline in professional interest due to factors such as:

- Academic overload
- Lack of independent learning skills
- Inconsistencies in teaching staff

To address this, the department promotes early involvement of students in **socially beneficial activities**, such as:

- Assisting in educational and practical seminars
- Organizing events in preschools and schools

Such experiences provide practical exposure, encourage initiative, and cultivate a sense of professional responsibility.

Workplace-Based Learning and Mentoring

To develop professional competencies, **master classes** are organized in collaboration with school teachers. These sessions function as **on-site mentoring experiences**, taking place in real educational environments. This direct engagement fosters:

- Practical skills acquisition
- Real-time knowledge transfer
- Understanding of modern teaching practices

Students observe that contemporary educators are not only competent professionals but also active contributors to pedagogical communities.

Educational Projects: "Speech Therapy in Faces"

A key element of the integrated system is the scientific and educational project **"Speech Therapy in Faces"**, designed for second-year students and supervised by senior students and faculty. The project has multiple objectives:

- Popularizing the contributions of Russian scientists in corrective pedagogy and speech therapy
- Developing skills in working with scientific literature
- Stimulating cognitive interest and broadening professional horizons**Project Implementation**

1. **Topic Selection**: Students, guided by faculty, choose a notable figure in speech therapy research.
2. **Literature Review**: They study the individual's life, scientific work, and contributions.
3. **Presentation Preparation**: Reports are developed and presented to peers, often aligned with International Speech Therapist Day.

Each presentation includes:

- Biographical background
- Scientific discoveries and key publications
- Supplementary materials for speech therapy students

This initiative strengthens both research and presentation skills and fosters an appreciation for the historical and scientific foundations of the profession.

Multimedia and School Partnerships

As part of the "Speech Therapy in Faces" project, students also produce **educational videos** in a

professional television studio. These videos cover the lives and work of notable defectologists and are created in partnership with **Secondary School No. 232**, Admiralteysky District, St. Petersburg.

This collaboration involves:

- University students
- School teachers and tutors

The multimedia aspect further enhances communication skills and expands public outreach.

Interactive Educational Initiatives

Among interactive formats, the **educational quest "From Theory to Practice"** deserves special mention. Timed to coincide with the Day of Russian Science, the quest includes:

- A **theoretical quiz** (blitz survey)
- A **code of rules** presentation for undergraduates
- A **practical segment** involving the creation and demonstration of teaching aids and didactic games

This activity develops teamwork, professional creativity, and applied skills.

"Herzen Environments" Project

The **"Herzen Environments"** initiative is a university-led career guidance project targeting students in psychological and pedagogical school classes. The project is structured as an **intensive academic course**, held in both autumn and spring semesters. Key components include:

- Campus visits and departmental tours
- Lectures on the university's history and departments
- Participation in **masterclasses**, **business games**, and **interactive sessions**

The project culminates in school-based **project presentations** by participating students. Those with successful defenses receive a **bonus of +5 to +10 points** on their Unified State Exam scores when applying to Herzen University.

This initiative not only boosts applicant motivation but also provides current university students with real-world experience in public speaking, event organization, and educational mentoring.

Distance Learning Initiatives

The university also actively contributes to the **"Extension at a Distance"** project. In this format:

- Students, under faculty supervision, develop and deliver **webinars** on school curriculum subjects (Grades 1–11), foreign languages, financial literacy, and university life.

- **Special webinars** are tailored for Grade 10–11 students, focusing on admission processes to Herzen University.

This digital component enhances the reach of career guidance efforts and reinforces students' teaching competencies.

Integration with Inclusive Education

The implementation of the holistic pedagogical system is carried out within the broader **"school–university" framework**, incorporating the active participation of educational practitioners from **inclusive and special education** settings. This integration ensures that future teachers are prepared for the challenges and diversity of the modern classroom.

Summary

The implementation of a comprehensive system of career guidance for students across all educational levels plays a vital role in the educational process and contributes directly to the university's development and competitiveness.

Career guidance during university education supports the formation of:

- **Professional motivation** (e.g., social significance, responsibility)
- **Socio-communicative and status-based motivation** (e.g., social achievement, career recognition)
- **Personal and professional self-realization** (e.g., applying talents and abilities to a chosen profession)

Ultimately, this integrated and multifaceted approach prepares future educators—especially those in speech therapy and special education—for meaningful, competent, and socially impactful careers.

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