

Theoretical foundations of the regional training program "Education in conflict" for teachers' professional development

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Abstract

The article is focused on the problem of helping instructors improve their professional abilities when dealing with conflict. The research's objectives are to support the theoretical underpinnings of the course and to create the content of a new training program for the professional advancement of Ukrainian teachers. The content of the professional development training program for teachers is based on a variety of scientific methods at many levels, including philosophic, general scientific, specifically scientific, and pedagogical approaches. This is where the scientific novelty of the research lies. We pay particular attention to the need of guaranteeing children's safety and their access to an education in times of war. The following modules make up the program's content: "Children's problems caused by armed conflict"; "Education in conflict: the essence, standards (on the information from UNISEF and UNESCO)"; and "Ways of implementation education in war in Ukraine." The study's recommendations for teaching strategies and the multidisciplinary nature of the regional training program "Education in Conflict" are what give it its practical value.

Keywords: education in conflict; regional training program; scientific approaches; professional skills of teachers.

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INTRODUCTION

The topicality of the research is stipulated by a search for new opportunities to alleviate the aftermaths of the conflict in the eastern region of Ukraine in order to realize the child's right to education, which is related with the necessity to form special professional competences in teachers to be applied in the context of the conflict. The system of teachers' professional development under the current educational reform and in the context of the conflict in eastern Ukraine faces some contradictions:

1) between the numerous scientific researches in pedagogy considering teacher training and professional development targeted in most cases at forming professional skills for work in the renovated Ukrainian school ([Elkin, Bielcheva, Oksa, Vorovka, & Holovkova, 2014](#); [Ponomariova, 2014](#); [Chaika, 2014](#)), for dealing with conflicts in non-belligerent education ([Bilyk, 2015](#); [Ilyina, 2015](#); [Trukhan, 2016](#); [Rozum, 2015](#); [Pynzenyk et al., 2018](#)), some certain researches considering teacher training for successful activities in a situation

of a military conflict ([Trubavina, Mikhailenko, & Yurieva, 2017](#); [Levchenko, Panok, & Trubavina, 2016](#)) and a need for a scientifically grounded content of a teachers' professional development program to be applied in the situation of the conflict in eastern Ukraine;

2) between an array of facts in Ukraine and in the world considering violence against the child's right to education, the impact of the conflict on realization of this right (UNESCO, UNISEF, INEE, Ukrainian Institute for the Study of Extremism) ([Ivashchenko, 2018](#); [Education in Fragile, 2018](#); [English, 2018](#); [Kramatorsk Police Department, 2016](#); [INEE, 2013a](#); [INEE, 2013b](#); [Bouquet, 2019](#); [Sany & Smiley, 2018](#); [UNICEF, 2014](#)) and lack of competence for work in education in conflict;

3) between an array of international researches and recommendations available in accordance with the problem of education in regions of military conflicts ([Ivashchenko, 2018](#); [Education in Fragile, 2018](#); [English, 2018](#); [INEE, 2013a](#); [INEE, 2013b](#); [Bouquet, 2019](#); [Sany & Smiley, 2018](#); [UNICEF, 2014](#)) and lack of theoretical foundations of the content of professional development programs for Ukrainian teachers as well as the programs themselves.

The online training course "Conflict Sensitive Education" ([INEE, 2018](#)) is rather short (2-3 hours), presented in English and does not reveal all Ukrainian realities. The UNISEF recommendations "Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding. Programming Guide" ([2016](#)) are not a training course but a set of self-training material. This groundwork gives the fundamental conception of the problem and its importance. However, they are not theoretically grounded and are not aimed at forming specific competences.

Thus, the purpose of the article is to substantiate the theoretical foundations of the teachers' professional development training program, which can successfully be implemented into work in the context of the conflict in eastern Ukraine. The purpose stipulates the following tasks: to set up theoretical foundations which can make grounds for a new content of the program and to work out recommendations for its application.

METHODOLOGY

The methods of the research are theoretical analysis of books and articles on the issue, induction, deduction, synthesis and modeling, summarizing. The research is grounded on the information and reports of UNESCO, UNISEF, INEE and other organizations in relevance with the problem, the list of which is given in the References. A thorough theoretical analysis of the material mentioned proves that formation of professional competences for teaching in conflict requires knowledge in different fields of human activities: pedagogy, didactics, security, management, sociology, conflict resolution, social work, jurisprudence, political science, etc. It is the cause of the fact that school becomes the centre of the area in conflict and teachers have to perform additional functions in their work: increasing concern for the life and safety

of children and the pedagogical staff in educational establishments; taking measures to provide children's and adults' security; giving social assistance; conflict management and team-building in groups with children, who have experienced psychological trauma, have witnessed hostilities; detection of violation of children's rights; development of the curricula and programs that can be applied in conflict; selecting forms and methods appropriate for teaching in conflict, e-learning is used whenever possible; providing parents with information considering public assistance; creating necessary conditions to implement the child's right to education in conflict; identifying the needs of the families; teachers have to perform functions of peace-builders and protectors in the community and in the educational establishment, are forced to deal with cases they are not experienced in. These aspects of pedagogical activity are new to pedagogical practitioners and have not been taught in pedagogical universities. Therefore, changes in working conditions extend teachers' duties and increase responsibility, require better competences, higher qualification and appropriate actions (ability to resist stress, work in extreme conditions, organize adults, parents, the community to provide children's security in educational establishments, creating necessary conditions to implement the child's right to education, etc.). The necessity of considering all these in the content of the new training program stipulates the importance of providing fundamentally new grounds and a set of approaches to the solution of this problem. Thus, there exists an urgent necessity in an integrated multidisciplinary program. It means that the content of the training program for the professional development for teaching in conflict should involve new theoretical foundations in the form of a set of scientific approaches of different levels and different fields relevant to the program's content, methods and forms of its application. It should be noted that this problem is urgent both for teachers in eastern Ukraine and in the rest territory of the country since all children, members of their families suffer from the aftermaths of the conflict. This presupposes the double character of the program: its considering the regional features on the one hand and its flexibility in applying on the other hand (for instance, different amount of time to study the educational material in dependence with educational purposes of a certain region, which provides a regional approach of management to the program's content). In fact, a training seminar for teachers of the Donetsk Regional Institute of Continuous Education has so far been held in Ukraine on the UNISEF material ([Conflict-sensitive education policy, 2012](#); [UNISEF 2014](#); [UNISEF 2016](#)), in which international experience and recommendations are described. It has raised the issue, outlined the ways of its solution in the world. Nevertheless, there is neither any theoretical foundation of the program's content nor practical recommendations as to the training methods. We claim that theoretical foundations of the contents of the regional educational programs on the issue must be grounded both on the universal values, the experience set out in the UNISEF materials and on the Ukrainian values and features that indicate the need to rely on:

1) the axiological approach, the principal values of which are human life and security;

2) the pragmatic approach to meet specific issues concerning children's and teachers' safety in the country;

3) the regional approach, which considers the nature, the context of the conflict and its manifestation in a certain region, specific features of life in the region and the level of the population security and is aimed at developing flexible educational standards, curricula, forms of teaching taking into account the level of safety of children and population, along with the state approach, which guarantees the right to education for all children;

4) the judicial approach which requires respect the child's right to education and creation of conditions to implement it in the conflict; organization of the community to provide measures for children's security;

5) the political approach focused on welfare policy, democracy and human rights regardless the military conflict;

6) the innovative approach, which involves teachers innovating in the organization and implementation of the educational process targeted at the best possible realization of the child's right to education and their safety in conflict; their authority to make and choose curricula and programs, which will best meet the requirements of education in conflict;

7) the interdisciplinary approach, which integrates all the professional specialists and teachers of the community to create conditions necessary to implement the child's right to education; ensures the safety of children;

8) the synergetic approach explaining teachers' self-organization in extreme conditions, their ability to identify the risk and danger for children. UNISEF ([Conflict-sensitive education policy, 2012](#); [UNISEF 2014](#); [UNISEF 2016](#)) claims the necessity to meet special standards of education in conflict.

So, the content of the program must be based on the risk-oriented approach (a theory of risks and hazards) for the sake of preserving lives and health of all the participants of the educational process and implementation of the child's right to education; considering specific features and resources of the community in realizing every child's right to education and interaction of the participants of the educational process for this purpose, which testifies to the need for reliance on the theory of the UN participation, the resource approach.

Teachers work with different categories of children: internally displaced children, the war veterans' children, children whose parents were killed in the armed conflict, children living in local communities in ordinary, not always prosperous families and experiencing social and economic aftermaths of the war. It is necessary to know the whole complex of children's problems in the region, community and school, to be able to identify them, to comprehensively and systematically react to them, to be able to find an individual approach to each child and to act as a peace-builder, to form in children the peace culture. Therefore, the child-oriented, problem-oriented, complex, gnoseological (for identifying and studying the child's problems),

systematic, diagnostic, cultural, personality-oriented, differential approaches are also the basis of the content of our program. Teachers require practical recommendations and tips regarding their actions in extreme situations. Such material is partly presented in UNESCO materials ([Kramatorsk Police Department, 2016](#); [Bouquet, 2019](#)), INEE ([2013a](#); [2013b](#)) but it is of general character, not specific to Ukrainian realia and Ukrainian legislation in education, organization of educational process, is not an educational program aimed at developing teacher competences. Thus, it is important in the content of teacher training to use such approaches as the pragmatic, situational, crisis interference, self-assistance, optimization, algorithmic, interdisciplinary approaches as well as to create frameworks and conditions of their application for teachers' effective coordinative actions aimed at combining efforts and optimizing the use of resources. These approaches are important to develop the ability to act on a ready-made algorithm or compile it quickly in the conditions of limited time and information concerning the life and health safety of children and adults, their right to education. Regardless of the conditions of the conflict the human and child's rights must always be abode (respected, protected, implemented) ([Karamushka & Dziuba, 2009](#)). Therefore, the teacher must comprehend and appreciate the human rights approaches ([Marks, 2016](#)) to be able to select the best strategy to protect them in a particular situation: informational, power, economic, political, balanced, non-resistance to evil by violence, exposure of violence and hatred. Particularly noteworthy is the informational approach to denote its importance for teaching activities in extreme situations and for preventing conflict-related problems. The teacher should be aware of how to use information, find it, check it, report it and distribute it in the conflict situation to prevent panic, to perform effective activity. Providing teacher training requires considering the andragogic approach for learning from experience, accounting teachers' competences, their motivation to study. The next among the essential approaches are the competence-oriented and the action-oriented ones which lead to the ability to act under certain circumstances. This proves the necessity of training, individual work, exercising and putting it into practice. Developing the content of the curriculum as an educational discipline requires appropriate theoretical foundation and its application into the teaching process is not possible without relevant approaches – andragogic, personality-oriented, e-learning.

Taking into account that school in the conflict zone becomes the centre of the area and provides help to the entire community, it is advisable to apply the social-work-approaches to the program development: diagnostic (functional), crisis-interference, client-oriented, model-creating-oriented, self-care support. Special attention should be paid to scientific approaches regarding the behaviour of a person in extreme situations aimed at gaining skills in controlling oneself and making influence on the others: sociological, psychological, social-psychological approaches, which train to treat the conflict objectively, to behave adequately in conflict and find out solutions.

On this basis, it is possible to identify a set of theoretical foundations for teachers' professional development training program for their successful activities in conflict in Ukraine (considering our classification and levels of scientific approaches (Trubavina, 2009), classification and levels of scientific approaches by I. Lipskiy (2004)):

1) philosophic approaches: gnoseological, child-centrism, pragmatism, theory of participation;

2) general scientific approaches: axiological, synergetic, systemic, activity, interdisciplinary, complex, optimization, resource, innovative;

3) specifically scientific approaches: approaches to the protection of human rights (informational, power, economic, political, balanced, non-resistance to evil by violence, exposure of violence and hatred), the risk-oriented approach to the security theory, the situational approach to the management theory, the political approach, the regional and state approaches to public administration, the legal approach, the approaches to social work: problem-oriented, diagnostic, crisis interference, self-care support; the conflictological approaches: the approach to psychology of behaviour in extreme situations, the cultural approach; the algorithmic approach through the theory of resolution, occupational safety approaches to work in extreme situations;

4) the pedagogical approaches: andragogic, competence-oriented, differentiated, educational, personality-oriented, e-learning. Thus, the development of the program content, selection of the forms and methods of teaching it involves integration of a set of approaches as the important, complex and multidisciplinary character of the problem cannot be restricted to pure pedagogy or psychology. It draws to the necessity of interactive teaching it by experts in different fields. It should be noted that the content of the teachers' professional development training program "Education in conflict" is grounded on the subjects, which have been taught in peacetime (occupational safety, life safety, medical training, general, age and pedagogical psychology), which eliminates their repetition in the content of the new program. This program is supposed to be applied for providing successful education in conflict only, though the previously acquired knowledge and competencies may be used by teachers as an update of the material learned to teach new. For example, group discussions on the issues of injury prevention and traffic rules are a common practice for all teachers. However, they have not been taught to explain children how to act in cases of hostage-taking, terrorist act, mine danger, etc. This definition of risks and dangers for children in conflict creates serious challenges for educators who have lived, studied and worked in peacetime. These aspects make up the content of the program proposed.

THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

For all those reasons, we have developed the content of the regional program "Education in conflict" for professional training of teachers and secondary

school administration, which is recommended for H. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University and Donbas State Pedagogical University. The program contains an explanatory note, a list of purposes and tasks, the syllabus, the content through the modules and themes, the description of the structure of the discipline, explanation of the methods and forms of teaching, methodological support, a list of references and information resources. The program is first and foremost intended for teachers of Kharkiv and Donetsk regions (which are the areas of conflict), where this knowledge is in urgent need.

The explanatory note indicates the topicality of the issue discussed regarding the risks and hazards for children, their families and teachers caused by the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine. The new working conditions require considerate innovation of the content of teachers' professional training. The purpose of the program is relevant with the development of teachers' general and professional competences for their activity in the conflict zone. The objectives of the course are as following: development of professional and general competences in teachers and heads of institutions of general secondary education in accordance with the job requirements and the conflict conditions; formation of teachers' availability to create conditions to realize the child's right to education, detection of cases of its violence, assurance of children's life and health protection, assistance to the families in conflict.

It should be noted that the professional development training program is based on the Declaration of School Safety, UNISEF and UNESCO reports, the Law of Ukraine "On Education" (2017). The program contains three modules: "Children's problems caused by the armed conflict", "Education in conflict: the essence, standards (on the UNISEF and UNESCO information)", "Ways of education implementation in conflict in Ukraine". The program offers a 30-hour course of full-time, part-time and distance learning: 10 hours of classroom work; 20 hours of individual work (part-time learning).

The subject matter of the module "Children's problems caused by the armed conflict" provides school teachers and administration for profound knowledge as to the problems, which children of different categories have in the result of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine as well as the aftermaths of this conflict and problems concerning realization of the child's right to education: social, legal, psychological, pedagogical, social-pedagogical, finance, economic, health problems. The program reveals the nature of child centrism, which is proclaimed an ideology of education in conflict. A separate category of children and their families are those living in compact places of residence. The problems of Ukrainian children are compared to the problems of children from abroad, who are also in conflict zones. The module purpose is to cultivate in teachers condemn against any violation of the child's right to education and availability to their detection, protection and creation of all the conditions for its realization, which shall be grounded on a thorough learning of the child-problem-statistics, considering visions and recommendations of distinguished people, treatment of the problem by different human rights organizations,

regarding Ukrainian statistics as to the killed and injured children, internally displaced children, children in the “grey zone”, orphans in the result of the armed conflict, cases of bullying in educational establishments as a result of the culture of war in children instead of the culture of peace at school, etc. The module reveals the risks and dangers for children in the conflict as well as the role of education in their prevention on the basis of the risk-oriented approach.

Module “Education in conflict: the essence, standards (on the UNISEF and UNESCO information)” provides innovation and development of teacher’s skills and knowledge for teaching process organization at secondary school in the conflict zone, in accordance with the international recommendations, standards and experience in teaching process improvements. The experience of Ukrainian and foreign education in conflict has been generalized. The module introduces UNESCO and UNISEF reports on the issue of education in military conflict, home recommendations on children protection in conflict through education, reveals the standards of education in conflict in Ukraine, the judicial and political approaches to such education. Furthermore, the module explains Ukrainian educational policy, the subjects and objects of education in conflict.

Module “Ways of education implementation in conflict in Ukraine” is aimed at teachers’ acquiring specific skills for teaching process implementation in the conflict zones, including the “grey zone”, creating the secure educational environment, which implies a friendly-to-child school, non-violence pedagogy, mediation, understanding services, school social psychological and pedagogical services, subject-subject relations between teachers and children, cooperation with parents, providing security for children and teachers in the conflict conditions, preventive work and crisis intervention in order to assure children’s life and health protection. The module explains the organization of secondary education in conflict.

The curriculum contemplates providing online lectures. Part-time and distance learning contains individual self-studying of some educational material, reading literature on speciality and doing practical tasks. Estimation of the skills and knowledge acquired in the professional training course is provided through individual tasks and exercises and on the results of the written test on speciality. Teachers can optionally describe their own experience.

Furthermore, the content of the regional training program for teachers’ professional development “Education in conflict” is explained through the modules and themes:

Module 1. “Children’s problems caused by the armed conflict”.

Theme 1.1. Children’s problems caused by the armed conflict in Ukraine and abroad: problems of internally displaced children, problems of children of soldiers of war in Donbass, problems of children from the occupied territories, from the “grey zone”, from places of compact residence, problems of all Ukrainian children caused by the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Psychological, pedagogical, social, economic, finance, legal, social-pedagogical,

health problems of children in conflict education. Statistics on the education of children in conflict. Child-centrism in education.

Theme 1.2. International organizations about aftermaths of a military conflict for children: UNESCO, UNISEF, other organizations and distinguished people regarding the aftermaths of the conflict for children and adults, the impact of the conflict on the behaviour and children's rights realization, the right to education in particular.

Theme 1.3. Risks and dangers for children in conflict: the table of risks and dangers for children which are caused by conflict. The role of education in their prevention. Protection of teachers' work and prevention of traumatic behaviour of children in conflict.

Module 2. "Education in conflict: the essence, standards (on the UNISEF and UNESCO information)"

Theme 2.1. The notion "education in conflict". The essence and meaning of education in conflict. Legal and political approaches to its application. Ukrainian regulations regarding education in conflict.

Theme 2.2. Standards of education in conflict: The subject matter of the UNISEF standards of education in conflict. The ways of their application in Ukraine. The terms of implementation of education in conflict.

Theme 2.3. Ukrainian and foreign experience of education in conflict: The experience of education in conflict in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The experience of education implementation in the countries with military conflicts (on UNISEF material).

Module 3. "Ways of education implementation in conflict in Ukraine"

Theme 3.1. Access to education in conflict: The subject matter of access to education and cases and reasons of its restriction. The ways of providing access to education. Ukrainian experience. International recommendations.

Theme 3.2. Security of children and their families, teachers in the conflict: Understanding of security and danger. Security theory. School security declaration. Security measures in secondary schools. School security plan. Regulations of teachers' actions in extreme situations at school. School as the centre of the area in the conflict. Friendly-to-child school. Bullying prevention. Non-violence pedagogy. Mediation. Social psychological and pedagogical services. Teachers' ability to resist stress, ways of its developing.

Theme 3.3. Organization of educational process in secondary education in conflict: The curriculum and the programs for secondary comprehensive schools in conflict. The forms of education available in conflict. Specific features of education in conflict. Recommendations regarding the educational process in conflict.

[Table 1](#) presents the structure and hour distribution of the discipline.

Implementation of the regional training program "Education in conflict" involves teaching methods which are different in the character of cognitive activity, in the ways of pedagogical guidance (with emphasis on individual work using the internet resources), in the resources of knowledge (teachers' professional experience included).

Table 1. **The structure of the discipline “Education in conflict”**

Module themes	Classroom hours		Individual work
	lectures	tutorials	
Module 1. “Children’s problems caused by the armed conflict”			
Theme 1.1. Children’s problems caused by the armed conflict in Ukraine and abroad	1		
Theme 1.2. International organizations about aftermaths of a military conflict for children	1		4
Theme 1.3. Risks and dangers for children in conflict	1	1	2
Module 2. “Education in conflict: the essence, standards (on the UNISEF and UNESCO information)”			
Theme 2.1. The notion “education in conflict”	0,5		2
Theme 2.2. Standards of education in conflict	1		4
Theme 2.3. Ukrainian and foreign experience of education in conflict	0,5	1	
Module 3. “Ways of education implementation in conflict in Ukraine”			
Theme 3.1. Access to education in conflict	0,5		2
Theme 3.2. Security of children and their families, teachers in conflict	1	1	4
Theme 3.3. Organization of educational process in secondary education in conflict	0,5		4
Total	7	3	20

The forms of learning recommended are classroom work in micro-groups, lectures, tutorials and training workshops. Application of the program implies using some methodological support: e-version of lecture, tutorial and individual work material; problem questions to the material studied at the tutorials; tests for self-control; tests checking the level of mastering the material studied; methodological material, professional literature for learners’ individual work; the list of references recommended to the learning course.

We have found out that scientific pedagogy has dealt only with fragmentary researches on the problem of substantiating the content of teachers’ professional development. It has been proved that the problem is not purely pedagogical, its solution requires accounting the heritage of different fields of knowledge and professional activities, which implies: new functions (peace-builder, right-protector, social work) and risks and hazards for children and their families, which are possible only in conflict conditions; an array of problems in realization the child’s right to education in conflict and their impact on children.

Therefore, the theoretical foundation of the training program for teachers’ professional development “Education in conflict” is a set of scientific approaches of different fields and levels. The content of the program must be of multidisciplinary character and requires reading by experts in different fields (educators, psychologists, social workers, security specialists, lawyers). It has been determined that development of the content of the regional training program for teachers’ professional training “Education in conflict” is based on a set of scientific approaches:

1) philosophic approaches: gnoseological, child-centrism, pragmatism, theory of participation;

2) general scientific approaches: axiological, synergetic, systemic, activity, interdisciplinary, complex, optimization, resource, innovative;

3) specifically scientific approaches: approaches to the protection of human rights (informational, power, economic, political, balanced, non-resistance to evil by violence, exposure of violence and hatred), a risk-oriented approach to the security theory, a situational approach to the management theory, political approach, regional and state approaches to public administration, legal approach, approaches to social work: problem-oriented, diagnostic, crisis interference, self-care support; conflictological approaches: an approach to psychology of action in extreme situations, cultural approach; an algorithmic approach through the theory of resolution, approaches to occupational safety in extreme situations;

4) pedagogical approaches: andragogic, theories of education content, competence-oriented, differentiated, personality-oriented, e-learning.

These theoretical foundations provided grounds for the regional training program for teachers' professional development "Education in conflict" that offers a 30-hour course on 3 modules: "Children's problems caused by the armed conflict", "Education in conflict: the essence, standards (on the UNISEF and UNESCO information)", "Ways of education implementation in conflict in Ukraine".

It should be noted that we conducted a training seminar on the program discussed in December 2019 upon the request of educators of comprehensive secondary school № 17 in Kharkiv, which was attended by the whole teaching and administrative staff (40 members). The teachers have admitted necessity and urgency of the program "Education in conflict", lack of professional skills and experience for dealing with children in conflict and have ordered the professional development course on the basis of this program in H. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University. Special appreciation has been expressed to practical guidance and exercises for teachers on dealing in conflict. Being well-aware of peace-building and mediation problems, the teachers claimed unsystematic character of their professional activity in conflict. Therefore, the first training seminar has confirmed a non-systemic set of professional competences in teachers for providing education in conflict and has proved the topicality of the content of The regional training program for teachers' professional development "Education in conflict".

CONCLUSION

To sum up, we would state that upgrading a teacher to work in conflict is an urgent issue that cannot be restricted to the program provided, which is limited in time (30 hours) and themes to study. But this program is the first

attempt to develop both theoretical foundations (a set of scientific approaches of different levels) for determining its content in new teacher environment in Ukraine (in conflict) and its content as a multidisciplinary one. It considers international recommendations, standards and experience, current scientific approaches. Unfortunately, there are no analogues of the program in Ukraine for now. It emphasizes the integrated character of the content and efforts in solving the complexity of the problem. It trains teachers to deal with the problems concerning realization of the child's right to education and assurance of children's life and health protection, to fulfil new functions in the context of the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Our further research concerns the experimental appraisal of the program in order to adjust its content considering the results of the experiment and teachers' experience.

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