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Formation of Typical Tasks of Professional Activity of a Cook in Wartime Conditions: Results of Situational Analysis

Larysa BACHIIEVA [1*]
Olena KAROLOP [2]
Raisa ZAGNYBIDA [3]
Liliia LOIAK [4]

[1] PhD (Pedagogy), Associate Professor, Associate Professor of the Department of Pedagogy, Methodology and Management of Education, V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, 4, Svobody Square Kharkiv, 61022, Ukraine; bachievalarisa@gmail.com; ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0188-6638;
[2] PhD (Pedagogy), Associate Professor, Associate Professor of the Department of Professional Education, Restaurant and Tourism Business, Luhansk Taras Shevchenko National University 3 Ivan Bank St., Poltava, Ukraine; ea_karolop@ukr.net, ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1272-0422
[3] PhD (Pedagogy), Associate Professor, Associate Professor of the Department of Hotel, Restaurant and Resort Business, Vasyl Stefanyk Carpathian National University, 57, Shevchenka, Ivano-Frankivsk, 76018, Ukraine; raisa.zagnubida@pnu.edu.ua; ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9583-9973;
[4] PhD (Economic Sciences), Associate Professor, Associate Professor of the Department of Hotel, Restaurant and Resort Business, Vasyl Stefanyk Carpathian National University, 57, Shevchenka, Ivano-Frankivsk, 76018, Ukraine; lila.loyak@pnu.edu.ua; ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3414-7302;
**corresponding author: bachievalarisa@gmail.com;*

Abstract: *The paper covers the problem of formation of typical tasks of professional activity of cooks in wartime conditions based on the implementation of the theoretical and methodological approach - situational analysis. War significantly changes the context of professional activity of cooks: new challenges arise related to the lack of resources, constant variability of the environment, increased risk and the need for prompt decision-making in complex and sometimes life-threatening situations. The features of such activity and successful implementation practices require analysis, generalization and structuring. In this study, the method of situational analysis as interpreted by A. Clarke (Clarke, 2003, 2005) was used for this purpose, which made it possible to identify the interaction between actors, resources, environment and values in a real professional context. The obtained data were structured on the basis of the activity approach (Kovalenko et al., 2025), which made it possible to form a list of typical tasks of a cook in accordance with the key elements of the activity: goal, subject, object, means, conditions, technology, product - and to carry out their substantial description. The formulated tasks allow a deeper understanding of the specifics of the cook's activity in wartime and to emphasize those aspects that remain unnoticed in peaceful life. The obtained results can be used to improve programs for professional training of cooks for work in wartime.*

Keywords: *situational analysis; professional activity; cook; wartime conditions; typical tasks; activity approach.*

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Introduction

The food industry occupies a leading position among the key and largest industries in many countries of the world (Radu et al, 2023). The level of development and stability of the food industry determine the economic situation in the state, affect its security, the formation of domestic and foreign markets, as well as the well-being of the population (Hu et al, 2024). That is why modern practice focuses on training specialists who can effectively solve current challenges of the present, in particular by forming the professional competence of kitchen staff in assessing the nutritional value of products, rational use of food surpluses (Ko & Lu, 2021; Lin et al, 2025); in assessing and improving sustainable development practices in the field of food procurement for professional kitchens (Filimonau et al, 2024); forming the competencies of chefs for the development of culinary innovations in achieving sustainable development goals (Suhairom et al., 2019, Wang & Ko, 2024) and others.

At the same time, the development of educational systems is determined not only by innovative trends. Extraordinary circumstances can also be a powerful factor when professional activity is carried out in wartime. They significantly transform the content of professional activity of cooks, giving it situational variability. This is caused by a number of factors: the nature of the workplace (from a stationary kitchen or restaurant to field conditions), the availability or absence of logistical and energy resources in the region, seasonality, the level of technical support, storage conditions for raw materials, requirements for finished products, etc.

The variety of conditions in which cooks work during wartime should not turn into chaos or remain the sphere of exclusively intuitive solutions. Solving problem situations cannot rely only on the experience, creativity or personal hardiness of a specialist - it should be based on a systemic understanding of the content of the activity, typical challenges and possible scenarios of actions. Therefore, this state of affairs heightens the need for research and analysis of the professional activity of a cook in wartime as a basis for the well-founded design of educational programs.

Traditional methods of studying the content of professional activity are usually based on observation of its implementation, interviews with specialists, as well as on the analysis of employer's demands. This makes it possible to determine the content of the activity, typical tasks and requirements for a specialist, which in turn becomes the basis for forming the content of vocational training. However, the professional activity of cooks in conditions of military operations remains poorly studied due to a

number of objective reasons: limited access to direct observation in the combat zone; high level of threat to researchers and participants; fragmentation of available information, which complicates the reconstruction of professional situations; lack of methodological approaches to modeling activities in extreme conditions.

However, the need to train specialists for the effective implementation of such activities is undeniable. The above causes a contradiction between the need for thorough knowledge of the content and structure of the professional activity of cooks in wartime conditions and the limited possibilities of its full study and analysis. This contradiction gives rise to the problem of defining and applying scientific research methods that would make it possible to: study the professional activity of cooks in specific (wartime) conditions; structure its content; systematize typical tasks for further consideration in vocational training programs.

The purpose of the study is to substantiate the use of situational analysis as a tool for studying the professional activity of cooks in wartime conditions and to develop typical tasks on its basis that can be used in training specialists for work in crisis situations.

The article covers: substantiation of the feasibility of using situational analysis to study the professional activity of cooks in the context of war; review of methodological approaches; construction of models of professional activity; description of the possibilities of integrating the results of the study into the content of vocational education through situation-oriented training.

Literature review

The issues of professional activity of cooks have been considered in a number of studies devoted to the formation of professional competence (Lin et al., 2025), the improvement of educational programs, the study of working conditions in the food sector (Filimonau et al., 2024) and the introduction of innovations in cooking technology, in particular artificial intelligence (Thapa et al., 2023). Considerable attention is given to the issues of sustainable development in the food sector (Hassoun et al., 2022), the flexibility and adaptability of employees to changes in market and environmental conditions (Hu et al., 2024), and the growing role of interdisciplinary knowledge in the professional activity of cooks (Roseman et al., 2021).

At the same time, there are almost no studies in the scientific literature that directly reveal the features of the professional activity of cooks in crisis or war conditions. The available works focus mainly on the functioning of food supply systems in emergency situations (Radu et al.,

2023) or on the organization of logistics supply of military units (Kirkpatrick et al., 2024), but do not detail the professional actions of specialists who directly prepare meals in the field.

The theoretical basis for understanding the specifics of professional activity in extreme conditions is research in the field of the activity approach, which allows structuring activity as a holistic system with certain components: goal, subject, means, conditions, technology, and result (Kovalenko et al., 2025). Within the framework of modern pedagogy, this logic is used to model the professional activity of specialists in various fields (Galeeva, 2015; Korkis & Storms, 2025); McComiskey et al., 2024).

At the same time, in recent years, there has been a growing interest in situation-oriented methods of analyzing professional activity, which take into account the complexity of the social context, the multiplicity of factors and the interaction between the participants in the process. One of such approaches is situational analysis as interpreted by Clarke (Clarke, 2003, 2005), which has proven itself as an effective tool for studying complex practices in socially tense or crisis conditions. This approach allows for the visualization and structuring of situations through the construction of maps of actors, resources, practices and conflicts.

The combination of situational analysis with an activity approach has not yet been widely reflected in scientific publications, but has significant potential for studying professional activity in war conditions. Such an interdisciplinary combination allows not only to reconstruct the professional situation, but also to identify typical tasks on which it is advisable to focus attention in vocational training.

Thus, the analysis of scientific sources indicates the availability of a methodological basis for the study, but indicates a gap in the description of the professional activity of cooks in wartime conditions. This justifies the feasibility of the proposed approach to modeling activity and forming typical tasks as an important tool for updating the content of vocational education.

Methodology

The methodological basis of the study was a combination of situational analysis as interpreted by Clarke (Clarke, 2003, 2005) and the activity approach to modeling professional activity (Kovalenko et al., 2025). By combining these two approaches in the study, we tried to carry out a systematic and structured study of the professional activity of a cook in wartime conditions, taking into account both the external context (interaction of actors, resources, environment) and the internal logic of activity (goal, subject, means, conditions, technology, and product).

As part of the situational analysis, a random map of the situation was constructed, which made it possible to collect, structure and visualize all the relevant elements that affect the professional activity of a cook in the military context. Therefore, the focus of analysis is a situation when applying this method. The goal is to identify the most important human and non-human elements of the studied situation by looking at it descriptively. The questions in the researcher's focus could be: Who and what is present in this situation? Who and what is important in the situation? What elements cause a change in the situation, for example, can modify or transform it? etc. This way, new data are revealed, analysis is stimulated, and aspects that have been ignored or overlooked are identified. (Clarke, 2003, 2005).

Within this map, key categories have been identified: actors (cooks, assistants, soldiers, commanders, volunteers, suppliers, etc.), social structures (unit organization, medical service, volunteers), material objects (equipment, products, inventory), temporal and spatial conditions (kitchen deployment location, schedule, mobility), emotional and psychological factors (stress, moral exhaustion, guilt, support), risks and threats (shelling, lack of resources, cooking errors), etc. This map became the basis for the initial reconstruction of the context in which the professional activity of a cook took place during the war, and made it possible to record a wide range of factors that shape problem situations. At this stage, an analysis of available empirical sources was carried out, in particular: published interviews with military cooks, video materials from field kitchens, reports of charitable organizations, as well as social posts describing difficulties and decisions made in a real environment. These data not only supplemented theoretical assumptions, but also provided substantive content for further structuring of professional activity using the activity approach.

Further, to streamline the obtained elements, the activity structure proposed in the activity approach was used, which provided for the following components of activity: goal, subject, means, conditions, object, technology, product and result. Based on this structure, typical tasks of professional activity have been created, which is the central result of the study.

The methodological procedure included the following stages: preliminary analysis of sources (interviews, publications of volunteers and military cooks); identification and grouping of activity components using situational analysis; construction of an ordered model of the cook's activity according to the logic of the activity approach; development of a classification of problem situations corresponding to each component of the activity structure; generalization of the results for the formalization of

potential educational competencies that can be formed on the basis of the developed system of situations.

The research methodology did not provide for a full-fledged empirical stage with the direct involvement of respondents for security reasons, as well as due to the difficulty of access to practicing cooks in the combat zone. Instead, a theoretical and analytical reconstruction of situations was used, which made it possible to create a scientifically sound system of situational modeling. Its results can become the basis for vocational training for the implementation of professional activities in war conditions.

Research results

This study adapted the approach of A. Clarke (Clarke, 2003, 2005) to the construction of an unordered map taking into account the specifics of the cook's professional activity in a military context. According to the methodology of situational analysis, such a map should look like a graphic visualization representing a set of interconnected elements of the situation - actors, material and intangible factors, organizational and temporal and spatial aspects, emotional impacts, etc. However, although such a format makes it possible to get a deep understanding of the complexity of the situation, it at the same time complicates the systematization of data and their practical use - in particular in educational modeling. Therefore, within the framework of our study, the map has been presented in a table format. This made it possible to organize information into certain categories, preserving the multi-component nature of the situation and at the same time making its content more accessible for analysis, generalization and further modeling of professional tasks.

As part of the study, interviews with cooks posted in open sources of information were used to form an unstructured map (table). In the process of creating the tables, key components were taken into account that reflected the interactions of participants and resources, as well as the specifics of organizational and social aspects. Consider them in more detail.

The first element is actors (participants), i.e. the main participants in the processes – cooks, volunteers and other individuals who influence the performance of professional tasks in specific situations. These actors were placed on the map (table) taking into account their roles and interactions in different contexts.

The second element is material resources. Resources available for performing tasks were identified separately, namely: ingredients, equipment,

etc. In the table (unstructured map), they were shown as limitations and opportunities arising from the availability or lack of resources.

The third element is social worlds. This component contains a characteristic of the social environments in which actors operate. Analysis of this content made it possible to identify social ties and networks that form the context of activity. These social worlds were represented on the maps through the relationships of actors with other subjects of activity.

The fourth element reflects organizational aspects. It reveals the organizational structure and internal processes that affect the effectiveness of activity. The table (unstructured map) contains information about organizational links, their interaction and possible organizational barriers.

The fifth element is challenges and limitations. The table (unstructured map) identifies the main problems and limitations that participants face in wartime – from logistical difficulties to psychological and physical stress. This allowed for a better understanding of the situations in which professional activity becomes the most difficult.

The last, sixth element –solution strategies – contains the methods and techniques used to overcome challenges and limitations. Thus, the table (unstructured map) shows a complex network of relationships and processes that makes it possible to study the professional activity of cooks in the context of war through a multifaceted prism of various factors and components. The unstructured map based on the results of the interviews (abbreviated) is given in Table 1.

Table 1. The unstructured map based on the results of the interviews by "*What they eat at the front. Military cooks tell*" (abbreviated)

Category	Description (excerpt from interview)	Examples/details
Actors (participants)	*"Three military cooks tell what they eat at the front"*	Cooks, soldiers, volunteers, friends
Material resources	*"They gave away all their canned goods, others started looking for ways to create high-quality freeze-dried food"*	Canned food, freeze-dried food
	"… vegetarian and vegan field rations appeared..."	Vegetarian and vegan dry rations
	"… we were given saucepans with such thin walls that even soup could burn in them"	Unprofessional cooking equipment
Social worlds	*"…he was the brand chef at the Flagman restaurant chain in Kyiv… Now he prepares food at the 128th separate mountain assault Transcarpathian*	The chef has a professional education, work experience

	brigade"	
Organizational aspects	*"The cooks are responsible for ensuring that the soldiers are well-fed and feel full of strength. Ruslan understands: a hungry soldier can be distracted"*	The goal of the activity is to provide nutritious food
	"… the unit has people responsible for food. …relatives and those who care continue to deliver home-cooked food…, the daily ration is the responsibility of the cooks"	The daily ration and menu are formed by the cook; home-cooked food comes from relatives, volunteers
	"It is better for volunteers who want to help effectively to find out in advance from the unit's cook what exactly they need"	Constant interaction with volunteers to ensure current needs
	"Food is delivered once a week"	Food provision for the military within the state logistics
	"Cooks need to fantasize and plan the menu in advance in order to make different dishes from the same ingredients…". "Food does not fall from the sky, I treat them with trepidation…."	The need to adapt the technology of cooking dishes; create conditions for preserving food; form a plan for the rational use of food
	"...he usually tries to provide his blood brothers with two side dishes so they can choose. If necessary, he prepares separate portions of dishes for fighters with food allergies..."	The need for identification of people with dietary restrictions
Challenges and limitations	*"I cooked for thirty people and for two hundred, in more or less equipped rooms or dugouts not far from the enemy, where we didn't burn wood so that the smoke wouldn't be visible…"*	Changing number of consumers; field conditions; need to disguise the kitchen
	"Somewhere there was a well, and somewhere water for cooking was delivered." "Paper towels are always useful, because they are convenient to wipe the	Limited amount of water

	dishes with before washing them: this helps a lot when the amount of water is limited"	
	"Just finished cooking breakfast, and begin cooking lunch, after lunch I immediately start cooking dinner – an eternal circle"	Physical overload in the process of work
	"And in the stressful everyday life of war, delicious food is "one of the few things that consistently cheers them up…". "Meals for the guys are a holiday. And if their mood improves, I consider that I have fulfilled my mission…"	Food as an element of influence on the psychological state to maintain morale
Solution strategies	*"… colleagues from the restaurant helped with gas cylinders and a stove, sometimes they deliver food. I took some things from home, such as knives, boards, frying pans and saucepans…"*	Help from friends, relatives and volunteers is necessary

The table below shows the results of constructing an unordered situation map based on the analysis of interviews with cooks working in wartime. This format allows the empirical data to be organized into key categories proposed in Clarke's approach (Clarke, 2003, 2005): actors, material resources, social worlds, organizational aspects, challenges and limitations, and strategies for overcoming them. Each category is accompanied by examples of statements from interviews that illustrate the characteristic features of the cook's professional activity in specific situations. In particular, the table demonstrates the complex interaction between cooks' personal resources, logistical difficulties, moral and psychological challenges, and creative ways of adaptation. This approach makes it possible to preserve the depth of the context and convey the complexity of the professional situation without reducing it to simple schemes.

Despite the tabular form, this map is precisely disordered, since it does not have a rigid structure or hierarchy between components. It captures a wide range of factors that simultaneously operate in a specific situation, and thereby lays the foundation for further data organization, activity modeling, and the identification of typical problem situations that require pedagogical processing in the training of future specialists.

An activity approach has been used to construct an ordered map. According to this approach, activity is considered as a system consisting of a number of structural elements that are interconnected and aimed at

achieving a certain goal. The main structural elements of activity include: goal - a conscious image of the desired result; subject - a person who performs the activity; object of activity - an object to which the actions of the subject are specifically directed; means - resources and tools used to achieve the goal; process (technology) - a sequence of actions implemented by the subject as part of the activity; product - a direct result of the actions performed; result – changes that occurred in the subject as a result of the performed activity, in particular the growth of his or her experience, competencies, etc. The model has the form (1):

$$A=f\,(G, S, O, M, C, T, P) \qquad (1)$$

where, f (…) – the function describing the implementation of the activity (A); G – goal; S – subject; O – object; M – means; C – conditions; T – technology (sequence of actions); P – product.

The presented model (1) allows for the description of any activity according to its structural elements. Analysis of the professional activity of a specialist according to these elements, in turn, makes it possible to determine in the future a list of necessary competencies, which serves as the basis for developing the content of vocational training (Kovalenko et al., 2025).

Thus, based on the previous description (Table 1), an attempt was made to structure the identified elements of the professional activity of cooks in wartime conditions according to the activity approach. Such systematization made it possible to present the situation not only as a complex interweaving of factors, but as a holistic activity with a specific goal, means, technology, conditions and results. The corresponding ordered map, built by the structural elements of the activity, is given in Table 2.

Table 2. Ordered map by the elements of the activity structure according to Table 1

Activity elements	Description (summary of interview materials)
Goal	Providing complete, nutritious and adapted to individual needs and a variable number of consumers food; taking into account psycho-emotional factors of nutrition
Subject	A cook who has a professional education or proven practical experience; characterized by a high level of professional motivation
Object	Limited and at the same time variable range of products: food supply for the military within the state logistics (a standardized set of products, focused on mass supply, long-term storage and stable transportation); individual rations (field rations); canned products (sometimes home-made); freeze-dried food products; bottled water or water from natural sources
Means	Standard equipment, improvised cooking utensils; frying pans, saucepans, other household utensils, as well as gas equipment with cylinder power; natural sources of energy and fuel
Technology	Independent planning of the menu for a certain period, given the limited resources and specific conditions; independent identification of dietary restrictions of consumers; use of boiling, frying, stewing and combined technological methods in accordance with the available range of products, technical means and possibilities for implementing the technological process
Conditions	Field operating conditions: arrangement of a field kitchen in dugouts, in open areas, etc.; the need to disguise the place of cooking
Product	Nutritious, varied and organoleptically attractive food, taking into account individual dietary restrictions, helps maintain the morale of personnel and increase their combat readiness

The contents of Table 2 demonstrate that the professional activity of a cook in wartime is characterized by a high degree of complexity, autonomy and dynamism. It covers the full cycle - from goal formation to obtaining a product that performs not only a nutritional but also a psychological function in a combat unit.

The study analyzed thirty interviews and publications posted in open sources with participants in cooking in wartime - cooks, volunteers, public activists, military personnel (Kotovych, 2023; Lebedieva, 2023; Morhun, 2023; Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, 2025; Pantiushnyi, 2023; Puchynets,

2023; Stukalo, 2023; Tsomyk & Klymenko, 2023; Zahorodnyi, 2022). The materials included both video and text publications, as well as evidence from media reports and social networks that contained descriptions of real professional experience. Based on these sources, unordered situation maps were developed in the format of tables, which recorded a set of interacting elements: actors, resources, social and organizational structures, temporal and spatial conditions, risks and emotional factors. Further structuring of these elements in the format of ordered maps in accordance with the activity approach made it possible to organize the available information by the key components of the activity (goal, subject, object, means, conditions, technology, product). Systematization and generalization of the content of ordered maps made it possible to identify typical tasks of the professional activity of a cook in wartime, which are repeated in different situations and can be used as the basis for the content of vocational training. Typical tasks, according to the structural elements, are given in Tables 3–9 with a description.

The key element of any professional activity, in particular that of a cook in wartime, is goal setting. In the context of war, this is the provision of the military personnel with full, safe and psycho-physiologically appropriate nutrition. Its achievement requires a comprehensive approach taking into account objective conditions and individual needs of consumers. One of the main challenges is the unstable number of people receiving food, which causes the need for flexible resource management and prompt adjustment of supply volumes. The physiological conditions of the military – injuries, exhaustion, hypo-/hyperthermia, infections – significantly affect the needs for nutrients and require adaptation of the diet to medical and preventive tasks. An additional complication is individual restrictions: allergies, intolerances, vegetarianism. Ignoring them can harm health, especially in the absence of medical care. Duty load determines different energy needs: combat missions, patrols, medical service or communications require differentiated approaches to the composition and calorie content of food. The psycho-emotional function of food is also important: food stabilizes emotions, maintains fighting spirit and cohesion. Familiar tastes, flavors and aesthetics of dishes have a compensatory effect in conditions of chronic stress. Typical tasks corresponding to the structural element "Goal" in the professional activity of a cook in wartime conditions are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3 Typical tasks by the structural element "Goal" in the professional activity of a cook in wartime conditions

Element of activity	Typical tasks of the cook's professional activity in wartime
Goal	- formation of a ration of full-fledged and nutritious food in a changing situation, characterized by: unstable number of consumers; special physiological conditions of persons receiving food; individual dietary restrictions; the need to take into account the specifics of the service functions of military personnel; - adherence to the principle of "food as a psycho-emotional factor"

The tasks presented in Table 3 show the goal orientation of the cook's activity in wartime. They emphasize the need for adaptive ration formation taking into account external and internal factors - the physiological state of consumers, the specifics of the service and the psycho-emotional impact of nutrition. This approach defines the role of the cook not only as an executor of technological processes, but also as an active participant in the life support system of personnel.

At the center of the professional activity of a cook in wartime is the subject - a specialist who makes decisions, organizes processes and reacts to extreme circumstances. His activity covers not only technological operations, but also the application of professional thinking, adaptation strategies and moral self-regulation. One of the key manifestations of subjective activity is making technological decisions in conditions of lack of resources, a variable number of consumers or disruption of logistics. The cook must rely on competence, experience and practical intuition, ensuring effective nutrition under non-standard conditions. Team interaction is no less important. Field kitchen is part of the military system. In the realities of combat operations, a cook often works in conditions of communication barriers, unclear orders or conflicts. The ability to coordinate actions with servicemen or assistants is critically important. The ability to act in ethically difficult conditions plays a certain role. Limited resources, violation of standards, moral dilemmas - all this requires the cook to make sound decisions that balance beliefs, situational needs and expectations of the team. Typical tasks that reflect the subjective component of the cook's professional activity are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4 Typical tasks by structural element "Subject" in the professional activity of a cook in war conditions

Element of activity	Typical tasks of the cook's professional activity in wartime
Subject	– making sound technological decisions based on one's own professional competence and practical experience; – establishing productive interaction with team members in situations of communication barriers, conflicts, or different levels of vocational training; – acting in ethically complex situations when it is necessary to balance personal beliefs, collective values, and specific circumstances.

Thus, the subjective dimension of a cook's activity in wartime conditions requires a combination of professional competence, psychological endurance and moral maturity. It is these qualities that ensure the effectiveness of actions in extreme situations. Further, typical tasks related to the objective component of a cook's activity - resources, ingredients and methods of adapting them to realities will be considered.

The object of activity covers the material basis of cooking - ingredients, raw materials, natural resources. The key task is to assess the quality of ingredients: fresh, canned, dried, freeze-dried, etc. In field conditions, the cook relies on organoleptic indicators, experience and intuition, without laboratory control. Wild plants and natural resources are important - herbs, berries, mushrooms, water. This requires culinary knowledge and caution: an error in identification can lead to poisoning. In the absence of refrigerators and disrupted logistics, the cook uses natural methods of storage - cooling in water or soil, airtight packaging, natural preservatives. The ability to replace traditional products with alternative ones – frozen, freeze-dried, plant-based – is important. Such replacements must maintain nutritional value and take into account restrictions (allergies, intolerances). Typical tasks that reflect the object component of a cook's activity in war are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 Typical tasks by structural element "Object" in the professional activity of a cook in war conditions

Element of activity	Typical tasks of the cook's professional activity in wartime
Object	– quality assessment of ingredients (fresh, canned, freeze-dried, dried, alternative products (substitutes); – use of wild plants and natural resources; – extension of the shelf life of ingredients in natural conditions; – replacement of traditional products with alternative ones (frozen, dried, canned, freeze-dried or plant imitators)

Thus, the object component of the cook's activity in wartime requires not only professional knowledge in the field of products, but also flexible thinking, caution and an innovative approach to the use of resources. The successful solution of problems related to the object of activity largely depends on the effective use of technological and material resources, which are discussed in the next section.

The means of professional activity of a cook in wartime include standard culinary equipment of logistics support and improvised devices used in non-standard situations. The choice of means affects the quality, speed and safety of food supply. Field equipment plays a key role - PAK-200, PP-40, KP-130, etc. It allows for centralized cooking in mobile conditions, but requires an appropriate level of training, maintenance, repair and rational use of resources. In the combat zone, improvised means are often used - bonfires, stoves, cauldrons, homemade stoves, gas burners. This requires adapting technologies to unstable heat sources and increased attention to safety. A separate task is the movement, transportation and repair of equipment, which is complicated by a combat situation. The ability to restore the equipment to working order or replace its functions with improvised means is a manifestation of professional hardiness. The cook must also perform storage, maintenance procedures, and in some cases, destruction of equipment if its evacuation is impossible. Typical tasks corresponding to the structural element "Means" are given in Table 6.

Table 6 Typical tasks by the structural element "Means" in the professional activity of a cook in wartime

Element of activity	Typical tasks of the cook's professional activity in wartime
Means	– use of standard culinary equipment (field kitchen PAK-200, PP-40, KP-130, etc.); – use of improvised equipment (cooking on a fire, in a cauldron, on a stove, creating a "homemade" stove or oven, gas equipment); – moving, transporting, deploying and repairing standard culinary equipment (field kitchen PAK-200, PP-40, KP-130, etc.); – storage, maintenance and destruction of standard culinary equipment (field kitchen PAK-200, PP-40, KP-130, etc.)

Thus, the means of professional activity of a cook in wartime significantly go beyond the usual technical support. The effective use of available equipment – both standard and improvised – is critically important for the successful performance of tasks in combat conditions. Next, we will focus on the conditions that shape the specifics of this activity and require special professional strategies.

The conditions of professional activity of a cook in wartime are fundamentally different from peaceful production and are accompanied by significant physical, chemical, biological and psychophysiological loads. They constantly create risks for the quality, safety and stability of food supply. Physical factors include temperature fluctuations, high humidity or dryness, vibrations, noise, poor lighting, physical overload. All this complicates the preparation, storage and serving of food. Chemical risks are associated with fuel vapors, smoke, and detergent residues. With poor ventilation or in open fire, these factors can cause poisoning or irritation, so even in conditions of limitations, it is important to follow safety rules. Biological threats include pathogens in products, mold, insect or rodent bites, as well as violations of sanitary and hygienic requirements. Lack of clean water, inability to wash hands or handle dishes require the cook to implement preventive measures even in difficult conditions. Psychophysiological factors also have a significant impact: working in a state of exhaustion, trauma, stress. The cook must remain able to work and make sound decisions, which requires hardiness, self-regulation and motivation. Typical tasks corresponding to the structural element "Conditions" in the professional activity of a cook in wartime conditions are given in Table 7.

Table 7 Typical tasks according to the structural element "Conditions" in the professional activity of a cook in wartime conditions

Element of activity	Typical tasks of the cook's professional activity in wartime
Conditions	– overcoming the impact of physical factors (temperature fluctuations, high noise levels, humidity or dryness of the air, vibrations, insufficient lighting, physical overload); – overcoming the impact of chemical factors (inhalation of fuel vapors, smoke or detergents); – overcoming the impact of biological factors (pathogenic microorganisms in products; mold; insect or rodent bites; hygiene violations; food infections); – overcoming the impact of the peculiarities of the labor process (implementation of productive professional activity in conditions of physical and emotional exhaustion, injuries or physiological limitations)

Thus, the conditions in which a cook's professional activity is carried out during wartime create serious limitations that require high adaptability, vigilance, and the ability to act in conditions of constant risk. Overcoming these challenges ensures not only the quality of food, but also maintaining combat readiness. Further, the technological component that determines the specifics of adapting culinary processes to the conditions of combat operations and limited resources will be considered.

In a military environment, food preparation technology is transformed due to a lack of resources and the need to provide food in any conditions. One of the main tasks is to adapt the preparation of dishes to limited conditions: lack of water, fuel, electricity, and products. The cook simplifies technological processes, reduces processing stages and cooking time, while maintaining nutritional value and safety. Modified recipes from canned goods, freeze-dried products, and substitutes are used. Multifunctional approaches are widely used - a combination of operations (for example, cooking, sterilization, heating) to save resources. Express methods are introduced that reduce cooking time without significant loss of quality. An important aspect is ensuring the continuity of food during movements. For this purpose, mobile technological schemes are used, which allow cooking meals in transport or when deploying a field kitchen. Particular attention is paid to sanitary safety in conditions of lack of water, disinfectants and proper hygiene. Typical tasks corresponding to the structural element "Technology" in the activities of a cook in wartime conditions are given in Table 8.

Table 8 Typical tasks by the structural element "Technology" in the professional activity of a cook in wartime conditions

Element of activity	Typical tasks of the cook's professional activity in wartime
Technology	– adaptation of technological processes to limited or changing conditions (limited amounts of water, energy resources, food); – simplification and modification of recipes taking into account available ingredients (sublimates, canned food, substitutes, etc.); – multifunctional use of technological operations (simultaneous cooking, heating and sterilization); – reduction of the duration of the technological process without loss of nutritional value (express technologies); – combination of heat treatment methods (boiling, stewing, baking in one cauldron/container); – ensuring continuity of nutrition when changing the place of deployment (mobile technological scheme of cooking dishes); – implementation of sanitary safety principles with minimal hygiene measures (water, disinfectants, protection against contamination of products); – reuse of heat/resources within one cooking cycle (for example, cooking + sterilization)

Thus, the technological component of a cook's work in wartime requires high adaptability, creative use of resources, and the ability to provide high-quality nutrition in a changing, limited environment.

The assessment of a finished dish as a result of professional activity is of key importance for ensuring its quality, safety, and functional feasibility. In combat conditions, laboratory control is often unavailable, so the cook is forced to rely on practical assessment methods based on experience, intuition, and professional skills. One of the main methods is organoleptic assessment (appearance, smell, taste, consistency), which allows for prompt detection of spoilage or technological violations even in field conditions. The next stage is an assessment of the dish's compliance with its functional purpose. In combat conditions, food should not only saturate, but also restore strength, support thermoregulation, be easily digestible, and sometimes hydrate the body. This requires an understanding of the impact of individual components on the physiological state of servicemen. Additionally, the specialist can assess the density, fat content, and degree of heat treatment based on practical criteria. This is important in situations where it is impossible to comply with normative requirements, and decisions need to be made independently and quickly. Typical tasks corresponding to the structural element "Product" in the professional activity of a cook in wartime are summarized in Table 9.

Table 9 Typical tasks by the structural element "Product" in the professional activity of a cook in wartime

Element of activity	Typical tasks of the cook's professional activity in wartime
Product	– organoleptic assessment of the quality of the prepared dish, taking into account the conditions of field serving (appearance, smell, taste, consistency); – assessment of the dish's compliance with its functional purpose (restoration of strength, easy digestion, warming, maintenance of water balance); – approximate determination of the physicochemical properties of the dish according to practical criteria (density, fat content, consistency, residual heat treatment, etc.)

Thus, the final product of a cook's culinary activity in wartime is not reduced only to a physically prepared dish, but is the result of a whole process that includes adapted technology, quality assessment and consideration of the physiological needs of consumers.

Summarizing the above, it can be stated that the professional activity of a cook in wartime is multi-component, variable and highly dependent on external and internal factors. Typical tasks identified on the basis of situational analysis include goals, subjective characteristics, object of activity, means, conditions, technologies and the final product. Taken together, these elements form a comprehensive model of the professional hardiness of a cook, which ensures effective nutrition of military personnel even in critical circumstances.

Discussion

The results obtained confirm the feasibility of combining situational analysis by A. Clarke (Clarke, 2003; 2005) with an activity approach for modeling the professional activity of a specialist (Kovalenko et al., 2025) in the study of the professional activity of cooks in wartime conditions. Such an interdisciplinary approach allowed not only to describe the complexity of situations, but also to structure them in the form of typical tasks, which is consistent with modern trends in the education of specialists focused on real production challenges.

The identified typical tasks by seven structural elements of activity (goal, subject, object, means, conditions, technology, product) demonstrate high variability, flexibility and resource dependence of the cook's activity in an extreme environment. This creates a basis for expanding the content of

the professional competence of cooks, which is important in the system of their professional training.

It should be noted that the analysis was carried out within one specific military context, which imposes certain limitations on the generalization of the results. At the same time, the large scale and duration of this context allow us to reveal the unique professional experience of chefs performing their activities in extreme conditions.

Although the analysis is based on open interviews and content generalization of data, its results have practical significance for educational programs, in particular in the formation of cases, training scenarios and models of response in critical situations. In further research, it is advisable to expand the empirical base and test the obtained models in the vocational education system.

Conclusions

The paper implements a methodological combination of situational analysis and an activity approach, which makes it possible to model the professional activity of a cook in war conditions as a system of interconnected structural elements. Analysis of interviews with cooks, volunteers and public activists, published in open sources, made it possible to create unordered and ordered situational maps, on the basis of which typical tasks of professional activity were formulated. The typology covered seven key elements of activity: goal, subject, object, means, conditions, technology and product. The identified tasks reflect the adaptive, contextually sensitive nature of culinary work in a combat environment, where not only technical skills are important, but also competencies in decision-making, ethical choices, team interaction, and resource management.

The results provide a basis for updating the content of cook's vocational training, taking into account the demands of wartime, as well as for further development of simulation training methods based on situational modeling.

Statement on the Use of AI Tools | *Artificial intelligence tools (ChatGPT-4o) were used exclusively during the preparation of the paper (some fragments of the text in Ukrainian) to improve readability and ensure appropriate language design.*

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