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TRANSFORMATION OF FUTURE FL TEACHER FORMAL EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF NEW UKRAINIAN SCHOOL QUALITY ASSURANCE

Anhelina Kolisnichenko

Lecturer, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University,
Uman, Ukraine

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2727-5042>, e-mail: anhelinauman@ukr.net

This article deals with the intensity and effectiveness of education reform in Ukraine in recent years, with a focus on the formal education of future foreign language teachers. The state of formal pedagogical education at this stage is analyzed. The latest documents proposed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine are reviewed and the prospects for their implementation in modern conditions are determined. Much attention is paid to the key components of the new Ukrainian school's formula, based on the main components which are necessary for the successful implementation in future foreign language teacher training. This article outlines the basic requirements for the qualifications of new Ukrainian school teachers, the challenges they face, and the need to develop critical thinking and an ability to apply innovative approaches. The author indicates the directions of pedagogical education development and analyzes their influence on the training of foreign language teacher quality improving. The article describes the internal and external quality assurance of teaching staff training and its professional development. The author points out the effectiveness of the pilot program «New Generation School Teacher» and the need to expand it in a larger number of pedagogical universities. As a result of analysis of the latest projects, programs and concepts, the author suggests a number of measures that may facilitate the rapid transformation of future foreign language teacher formal education in Ukraine. The main steps which can have a positive impact on the raising quality of foreign language teacher training in future are defined in this article as follows: setting an appropriate bar of the foreign language external assessment results; changes in the content of the training programs for foreign language teachers and the forms and methods of teaching major subjects; development of online learning and learner's autonomy; establishing cooperation between different stages of education. The implementation of the measures suggested by the author may contribute to more intensive and effective changes in the formal education of future foreign language teachers in Ukraine.



Key words: educational reforms, educational requirements, formal teacher education, new Ukrainian School, life-long professional development, quality assurance, stages of education.

У цій статті розглядаються питання інтенсивності та ефективності реформування освіти в Україні протягом останніх років з акцентом уваги на формальній освіті майбутніх вчителів іноземних мов. Проаналізовано стан педагогічної освіти на даному етапі. Здійснено огляд останніх документів, запропонованих МОН та визначено перспективи їхньої реалізації в сучасних умовах. Значна увага приділяється ключовим компонентам формули нової української школи, що базуються на формуванні компетенцій, необхідних для успішної професійної реалізації майбутніх учителів іноземних мов. Ця стаття окреслює основні вимоги до кваліфікації вчителів нової української школи, виклики, які постають перед ними, вимагаючи розвиток критичного мислення та здатність застосовувати інноваційні підходи. Зазначено напрями розвитку педагогічної освіти та проаналізовано їхній вплив на підвищення якості підготовки вчителів іноземних мов. У статті охарактеризовано внутрішнє та зовнішнє забезпечення якості підготовки та професійного розвитку педагогічних працівників. Автор вказує на ефективність пілотної програми «Шкільний вчитель нового покоління», та необхідність поширення її у більшій кількості університетів педагогічного напрямку. В результаті дослідження останніх проектів, програм та концепцій, автор пропонує ряд заходів, які сприятимуть швидкому процесу трансформації основної освіти майбутніх учителів іноземних мов в Україні. Визначені у цій статті, основні кроки, які у перспективі можуть мати позитивний вплив на якість підготовки вчителів іноземних мов, полягають у наступному: встановлення належної межі щодо результату ЗНО з іноземної мови, зміни у змісті курсу підготовки вчителів іноземних мов та форм і методів викладання фахових дисциплін, розвиток онлайн навчання, налагодження співпраці між різними етапами освіти та різними учасниками навчального процесу. Реалізація запропонованих автором заходів сприятиме більш інтенсивним та ефективним змінам у базовій освіті майбутніх вчителів іноземних мов в Україні.

Ключові слова: освітні реформи, вимоги до освіти, формальне навчання вчителів, Нова українська школа, професійний розвиток впродовж життя, забезпечення якості, рівні освіти.

Introduction. Ukrainian society has been demanding changes in education for a long time. Looking back over last several decades, more and more participants of educational process including authority, teachers, learners and their parents often may be not satisfied with the academic results which they achieve in the end of their studying. In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in raising the bar of education from primary to adult one. The quality assurance in higher education institutions (HEIs) in Ukraine is fast becoming a key instrument in pedagogical education development.



New higher pedagogical education should train teachers of future, who require both knowledge and skills, who are able to reflect and think critically. It is a challenge for higher education institutions to educate new generation teachers because of some obstacles which prevent them from implementing recent reform steps.

In 2018 the state educational reform «New Ukrainian School» (NUS) has been launched and gave a starting point to a dramatic change in Ukrainian education. It is somewhat surprising that the reform has begun with primary school, but not with pedagogical universities. New and experienced teachers for the NUS were trained not at universities but at short-term intensive courses which included both full-time and distance learning with the use of online resources. So the possible reasons why it happened out of universities may be lack of time and funding limitation. But some other questions may be asked: what to do with future FL teachers who are current students and should they also visit intensive courses after their formal education? In order to avoid such problem in teacher education, Ukrainian system of FL teacher training needs changes according to the NUS requirements. If the aim of the NUS is to create a school that may provide learners not only with knowledge but also the ability to apply them in life, then the aim of the new Ukrainian higher formal pedagogical education is to train the professionals who can respond quickly to any changes and are ready for life-long development, anticipating the demands of society.

A number of researches have reported the state, achievements and problems of major reforms in higher education in Ukraine, which started by the adoption of a new version of the Law on Higher Education in 2014. Petro Kostrobiy, Yuriy Rashkevych investigated the establishment of national higher education system during 1991–2002 and point out the main achievements of that period amount which the main are as follows: Ukraine formally joined European Higher Education Area, certain instruments of the Bologna process were introduced, and different aspects of internationalization of individual HEIs and higher education system grew stronger. The observers have also drawn attention to such problems as lack of cooperation between education and science in Ukraine, incompleteness of the third cycle of higher education (doctoral education). Furthermore, the idea of ECTS and competent-based approach did not get inside the process of creation and implementation of study programs, academic autonomy stayed a dream, no real steps for assuring higher education quality were taken (Kostrobiy, P., Rashkevych, Yu., 2017, p. 20). So, higher pedagogical education needs more intensive transformations.

In a study which set out to determine the main peculiarities of the new vision of the higher education standards content Yevhen Nikolaiev also mentions new rules of awarding academic degrees but concludes that the legal innovations created in educational area in 2014 are not always implemented as it is desirable (Nikolaiev, Ye., 2017, p. 28). Furthermore, Oleksandr Dluhopolskyi highlights that the strategic goal of Ukrainian universities today must be the creation of efficient internal systems of quality assurance, which would aim at constantly improving education quality and activities in HEIs (Dluhopolskyi, O., 2017, p. 29). Together, these studies outline a critical role for HE quality assurance and highlight the need to enhance the work in reform implementing by development of formal pedagogical education. Pedagogical universities shouldn't operate in vacuum; they have to set connection



with schools, authorities to know what academic needs and education requirements should be followed. Questions have been raised about sharing responsibilities between all the participants of the educational process and establishing collaboration.

The aim of this article is to investigate the use and necessity of changes in FL teachers training programs in the context of emerging the NUS and suggest measures which may facilitate transformations in formal FL teacher education.

Methodology. The paper uses qualitative analysis in order to gain insights into problems of pedagogical education development and measures which may be taken. We also used theoretical research methods, such as analysis of academic and pedagogical studies connected with the topic of this research and content analysis of research materials.

According to recent reports (Mazzarotto, J., Rosada, A. F., Nola, A.), teachers are not just transferors of knowledge. Teacher role refers to the different functions a teacher can have in a class. The role usually implies the relationship between the teacher and learner, particularly in terms of the autonomy the learner has over their learning (Mazzarotto, J., Rosada, A. F., 2016). The roles of FL teachers have also enriched and they should be controllers, prompters, facilitators, assessors, managers, tutors and resource, etc. (Nola, A.).

The change of teachers' roles is partially the aim of new Ukrainian school. Amount creators of this new vision of Ukrainian school are: Elkin O., Hrynevych L., Kalashnikova S., Khobzey P., Kobernyk I., Kovtunets V., Makarenko O., Shiyani R., Malakhova O., Nanayeva T., Usatenko H. According to experts, in the short-term perspective, professionals who are able to learn throughout life, think critically, set and achieve goals, work in teams, communicate in a multicultural environment and possess other contemporary skills, will be the most successful on the labour market (The New Ukrainian School, 2016, p. 4).

The guidelines for the teacher of the NUS report that teachers have been given an academic freedom. They should be able to work out the author's educational programs, choose textbooks, methods, strategies, methods and means of teaching, actively express their own professional opinion (Bibik, N. M., 2018, p. 7). However, the teacher academic freedom requires academic responsibility for the learners' output. In addition, it is necessary to obtain the high quality of formal education that will facilitate the further professional development of a FL teacher give the ability to fulfil the curriculum properly, to select the appropriate textbook level according to the educational purpose, to use teaching methods and tools effectively. So, these skills future FL teacher must be able to get during their studying at the new teacher training programme suggested by formal pedagogical education.

Recent decades, the FL teacher training system in Ukraine has included the subjects of two main areas: psychological-pedagogical and linguistic. The pedagogical component contains basic knowledge of Psychology and Pedagogy; in addition, Social sciences are also included into the list of subjects. Somehow, all of them have an influence on a formation of future FL teacher, but according to the content they are theoretical, and have little practical value. So it is difficult for students to get insight into the practical importance of these subjects and see their professional realization. At the same time, theoretical material may be duplicated in similar



disciplines, which negatively effects on the appropriate perception of information and adequate attitude to the subjects. Higher education learners should have a clear vision of their professional realization that involves transformation knowledge into a tool, while any course or training programme should demonstrate why and how it can be used in the classroom.

Traditionally, future FL teachers can get formal pedagogical education at the bachelor's training pedagogical university programs. The most valuable study programme is the programme that corresponds to the individual student's capacities, motivation and interests, the programme where the student feels that he or she is the right person in the right place (Bussemaker, J., 2015, p. 3). It is worth considering the directions of improvement of pedagogical education offered by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine that are defined in the Concept of pedagogical education development, which are as follows:

1. Development of a modern teaching profession model in the context of the society needs and prospects for the national economy raising and global technological change.
2. Transformation of higher, professional tertiary formal pedagogical education.
3. Determination of perspective ways of pedagogical staff life-long professional development (Kontseptsiia rozvytku pedagogichnoii osvity).

As can be seen from these areas, the transformation of pedagogical higher education is one of the main tasks related to improving the quality of teacher training. Another key aspect of developing pedagogical education is internal and external quality assurance. While observing the system of internal quality assurance of teacher training we focused on the foreign language teachers training and defined components which need changes:

- design and approval of programmes;
- student-centred learning, teaching and assessment;
- student admission, progression, recognition and certification;
- teaching staff;
- learning resources and student support;
- information management;
- public information;
- on-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes;
- cyclical external quality assurance.

In addition to the internal quality assurance of training and professional development of pedagogical staff, it is also necessary to define the external system components, amount which: consideration of internal quality assurance; designing methodologies fit for purpose; implementing processes; peer-review experts; criteria for outcomes; reporting (Bugrov, V., Gozhyk, A., Khrutska, O. et al., 2016, p. 11-41).

On the other hand, analysing the compliance of a FL teacher training with national educational standards we can't neglect the formula of the NUS which also consists of components. There are 9 of them and some have a priority to foreign language teacher education. They may be divided into two categories: general and special. General components include: the life-long education; decentralization and



effective management that may give schools a real autonomy; child-centrism; new school structure; fair distribution of public funds that ensures equal access for all children to education of high quality. Special components can be viewed focusing on foreign language teacher training in HEIs, which include:

- the new content of education, which outlines a competency approach, and identifies the main professional competencies;
- a partnership between learners, teachers, parents, the aim of which is the equal treatment of all participants of the educational process, where the learners are able to feel the teachers' support and parents with teachers are equally aware of learning goals and ready to give learners time and opportunity for academic development without any pressure;
- changing the attitude to process of foreign language teacher training by realising the aims which are to motivate and stimulate professional development;
- the new educational environment, which offers more opportunities for academic mobility, distance and blended learning (Mazzarotto, J., Rosada, A. F., 2016, p. 7-8).

Taken together all these components, we are able to analyse similarities in components lists of HEIs and the NUS quality assurance. A comparison of the lists reveals a close connection of education and explicit parallel development of secondary and higher education. Amount similar components we may define such as: a) approval of programmes content; b) learner-centred education; c) teachers' professional development; d) partnership and collaboration; e) access to learning resources.

These components show the direction which education should follow. Some pedagogical universities have already started their transformations in FL teacher training programmes by taking part in projects which contain all the components that are mentioned in our study. Since 2013, several universities have taken part in the project «New Generation School Teacher» initiated by the British Council in Ukraine. In 2019 the 1st new generation of teachers who are expecting to work in a New Ukrainian School graduated from the Bachelor's university programs. However, it is hardly possible to claim that the NUS is supplied by qualified new generation teachers. The problem is in little quantity (only 13) of universities which took part in the project and as the result we have not enough new teachers who are ready to work according to new requirements. So the problem of changes in the context of the future foreign language teachers training during their formal education is obvious and needs immediate solving.

The observed recent projects, agendas and concepts gave additional opportunity to propose a number of measures that will facilitate the rapid transformation of future foreign language teacher formal education in Ukraine. In view of all that has been mentioned so far, we may suppose that it is necessary to begin with the entering the FL teacher training programmes, which should be accessible only for applicants with a sufficient level of a foreign language command. It means that, it is necessary to set an appropriate bar for external assessment results (e. g. 150 points), which allows selecting better applicants and gives opportunities for more effective further learning. Also, it is advisable to give a chance to become students to those



applicants who have results slightly below the established limit, but, if they take commitments to attend language intensive courses during the first year of studying and retake the test in the end of it. Only if students improve their result and reach the fixed bar, they may continue their studies.

The next step should be a critical analysis of the FLT training content, including the list of subjects. This analysis can be done by involving experienced teachers. Through various types of surveys and direct classroom attendance, studying the content of the discipline, it may be possible to determine what changes need to be done and at what level. Another important step is to increase the number of hours for major subjects studying and to maximize the use of foreign language for their teaching. For example, future English teachers, in addition to the subjects of the linguistic cycle, which are always taught in English, should be able to study the disciplines of the pedagogical cycle in English, it is especially important to teach methodology using the target foreign language. This approach to the content of the education of future foreign language teachers may provide an opportunity for more effective language and methodological training, which will certainly have a positive impact on professional quality. Another advantage is the access to foreign language resources and papers of foreign educators that can be used for work and self-education.

It is also necessary to change the forms of teaching subjects by reducing the number of hours for lectures, or to place them in an online environment. In return, there is a need to increase the number of practical classes and students' autonomous learning. Meetings with experts (experienced teachers) who would share their own experiences with future teachers may be extremely important.

Finally, the use of digital technologies to educate teachers should be stepped up. It is necessary to promote the development of digital competency for both teachers and learners. In addition, there are problems with the availability of sufficient digital learning tools and free access to online resources. Universities should create certified online courses that can be used for blended and distance learning.

An important problem that needs to be solved is cooperation between educational institutions at different stages of education and their authorities. The current state of such cooperation does not allow setting mutually beneficial relationships where all participants of the learning process are guided by each other's needs and provided with the necessary information. Such gaps can be eliminated by creating conditions and environments for discussing educational issues, such as cooperation centres (e.g. FL hubs).

Conclusion. Transformations in the formal education of future foreign language teachers have been in a progress in Ukraine already, but they need to be increased. Among the problems that effect negatively on the intensity and effectiveness of university education reform are the funding limitation for the higher education sector and the state support priorities for the development of basic education. However, the rights of HEIs autonomy give them the opportunity to develop teacher education independently by training 'change agents' for the New Ukrainian School. The measures, suggested in this paper, may be used to improve the quality of FL teacher training in the process of getting formal pedagogical education by students.



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