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Priorities of the Teachers' Education Progress in Ukraine

Priorytety rozwoju edukacji nauczycieli na Ukrainie

Introduction

Under modern conditions in Ukraine the problems of teacher education are being actualized as well as the requirements for its content are being increased that is a topical direction of reforming the national education system. President of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine V. Kremen indicates that teacher education directly affects education in general and, in particular, its quality. Reforming teacher education is an essential factor of forming a high-developed moral personality who is ready not only to use the information he/she possesses but also to generate new knowledge, be a unique source of creativity and productive public activity.

Teacher education in Ukraine is a system of teacher staff training in higher education institutions of all forms of property, postgraduate teacher education institutions and administration authorities in the field of education. The network of higher education institutions in Ukraine providing training and advancement training of scientific and pedagogical and teacher staff consists

of teacher colleges, academies, universities, traditional universities and other higher education institutions on the condition of their fulfilling the standards of higher education.

Main Normative and Legal Mechanisms for Developing Teacher Education

Teacher education is based on the key provisions of the Constitution of Ukraine, the laws of Ukraine “On Higher Education”, “On Education”, “On Pre-School Education”, “On General Secondary Education”, “On the Non-Formal Education”, National Doctrine on Education Development in Ukraine in the 21st Century, National Strategy of Education Development in Ukraine for 2012–2021, the European Pedagogical Constitution as well as the requirements of UNESCO, the International Organization for Education Development, the Reports of the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century. Unfortunately, the extraction of pedagogical specialties from the official list of knowledge fields does not allow to properly fulfill the requirements of state documents of immense value that define strategic vectors for teacher education development oriented, first of all, toward:

- 1) establishing continuity, humanistic paradigm, democratization and variability of teacher education;
- 2) ensuring a high level of teacher staff training quality;
- 3) professional development of teaching staff able to work in terms of institutional openness of teacher education institutions, foreign language skills activation and orientation toward academic mobility;
- 4) increasing mobility by establishing the transparency of qualifications and the mutual recognition of diplomas (Авшенюк, 2011).

Teacher Education under Conditions of Modern Public Transformations

Today the understanding of the teacher education nature is being radically changed: V. Zyazyun (2011) states that “comprehending a pedagogical component of any professional education is replacing its narrow understanding as teacher training at various levels, as in most cases engineers and managers, scientists, politicians and social workers as well as any other specialists in the

future will become team leaders, members of intense human communication, where they may need not only teaching literacy, but also pedagogical competency in the issues of impact on the consciousness and behaviour of others” (Зязюн, 2012).

Consequently, the aim of teacher education should be the quality training of highly qualified and competitive teaching staff for all the spheres of education able to carry out professional activities on the basis of the principles of humanism, democracy, free competition and high technologies.

Under modern conditions of information-intensive society the problem of differentiating functional responsibilities of a teacher, a pedagogue is being actualized. Excluding the very problem it is impossible to develop a modern teacher education in Ukraine on innovative, axiological and acmeological basis. Today, the teacher, the pedagogue is a carrier of humanitarian culture, ethical, cultural and aesthetic values, researcher, psychologist, master, who stimulates his/her pupils and students to self-development, self-actualization, self-improvement, self-realization. New aspects of the modern teacher's activities have been identified:

- preparing pupils, students, young people to live together in modern globalized world, constantly reproduce and improve the conditions of a decent human existence;
- support and pedagogical maintenance of forming key and subject competencies of the personality needed for the knowledge society and lifelong learning;
- pedagogical and psychological support of innovative development of holistic educational environment;
- integration of information and communication technologies in learning activities and professional practice of teachers;
- a responsible attitude to their own professional development as a continuous process throughout life (Авшенюк, 2011).

One of the problems of modern teacher education is forming a person with an innovative type of thinking, innovative type of culture, readiness for innovative type of activity, a person able to respond to all the challenges of civilization.

Accordingly, quite topical is the search for a new prognostic model of teacher education development, where the basic principles according to the European Pedagogical Constitution must be anthropocentrism, humanization,

continuity, accessibility, scientific nature, consistency, fundamentalization, a combination of national educational traditions and leading international practices, practicality, predictability, innovation, academic autonomy, creativity.

Teacher Education as a Constituent of Higher Education System

Teacher education is an integral part of higher education system, which provides training for future teachers with comprehending their role in the innovative updated society and the need of reforming on the basis of professional training. During the last decade positive trends in the transition from technocratic to cultural and humanistic concept of the teacher's personality development have been observed. Professional training has been meaningfully reoriented. At the beginning of the 1990s mono-pedagogical specialties such as "primary school teacher", "math teacher", etc. dominated. At present, one can observe the process of professional training integration, which resulted in training Bachelors and Masters of binary fields in higher education institutions.

It must be noted that the content of teacher education is undergoing significant changes, namely, introducing into the curricula the disciplines on the problems of educational philosophy ("Philosophy of Education and Science Methodology"), education management ("Fundamentals of Educational Management" ("Education Management", "Management in Education"), information technologies in education ("Computer Information Technologies in Education and Research" ("Information Technologies in Humanitarian Education", "Information Technologies in Education and Research"), methodology of pedagogical research ("Methodology of the Organization of Pedagogical Researches", "Methodology and Technology of Pedagogical Research") as well as subjects whose content is structured on the basis of an integrative combination of various knowledge fields ("Pedagogical Psychology", "Psychology of Culture", "Media Pedagogy").

At the same time there are disadvantages of professional teacher training that can be neutralized due to taking into account modern social needs and civilizational requirements of the 21st century. The current normative and legal and legislative framework does not fully meet the needs of contemporary educational practices and the teacher is not brought up as a subject of modern

values. Quite insufficient remain attention and quality control of teacher education, which is a combination of the properties of education, determining its ability to fulfill the relevant needs of the individual, society and state. The quality of teacher education is primarily provided by its content.

Adjusting teacher education in Ukraine to the European level requires ensuring students' right to the free choice of individual educational trajectories of professional training. The experience of the developed foreign countries, as L. Khomich (2012) points out, proves that the students' preference towards alternative variable curricula, disciplines, courses, alternative learning technologies, order, logic and sequence of subject mastering, the choice of the ratio of lectures and practical classes, forms and methods of training, monitoring and assessing the results of subject mastering, scientific school and research topics, the goal of teacher placement, the form of a state exam provide conditions for the realization of personality-oriented principle in education (Хомич, 2012).

Unfortunately, the carried out analysis of the state standard of higher teacher education leads to the conclusion that 70–75% of school time is devoted to the study of the normative disciplines mandatory for all universities. The remaining time (about 25–30%) is given to optional academic disciplines. Whereupon, an important issue consists in students' free choosing optional disciplines, as the majority of higher education institutions impose them on students, not taking into account their wishes, needs, interests, professional orientation. It is necessary to review the relationship between mandatory and optional disciplines in the direction of increasing the latter, which will provide the rapid response to their educational needs and personal orientation rather than a one-sided theoretical and practical training.

Since the 1990s the tendency of pedagogical institutions' successful transformation into mediocre universities with a view to merging with competitive institutions has increased in Ukraine. Today the "universitization" of pedagogical institutions has led to the leveling of psycho-pedagogical teacher training, which is a key part of his/her professional and personal development. Such subjects as "Pedagogy", "History of Pedagogy", "Pedagogical Mastery" and others have been extracted from the curriculum of many higher education institutions. If the higher education institutions of technical, economic, agricultural and other profiles are opening departments of pedagogy, the classical and pedagogical universities are eliminating or merging them with

other departments. So, one can trace an insufficient psycho-pedagogical training of future teachers.

From such a position one can determine the priority of psycho-pedagogical training as the basis of the professional teacher training, which involves the forming of deep anthropocentric knowledge, communicative skills and competences in the field of human relations, defined by taking into account the peculiarities of specialties. I. Zyazyun (2012) notes that the teaching profession is probably the most dependent on psychology as teaching activities of the pedagogue and, in particular, his/her pedagogical actions are aimed at the development of an individual. At the same time the teacher is facing “the living psyche of the subject” in his/her pedagogical activity. Teachers and students are active members of the subject-subject interaction and constantly carry out value-semantic exchange that involves the combined transformation. Therefore, the interaction should be the dominant object of psychopedagogy. This is the very angle where the role of the teacher in the educational process can be understood (Зязюн, 2012).

Today the content of future teachers’ psycho-pedagogical training should be integrated. It must be based on psychopedagogy, that is able to solve the problem of confrontation between the psychological and pedagogical sciences and therefore to form a new pedagogical thinking grounded on the superiority of individuality over the simple thinking; individual educational interests over the standard curriculum; self-development, self-learning over unified mastering, “transfer” of knowledge.

A special place in teacher education takes continuous teacher placements of students, i.e. an integral part of professional teacher training, which serves as a criterion of truth in the pedagogical process. Continuous teacher placements should now be the main practical laboratory of the theoretical knowledge and practical skills applications, self-disclosure of the students’ internal potential during creative educational activities. Without teacher placements professional training is impossible, however, during 1991–1998 teacher placements comprised 1189 hours in accordance with the curricula of teacher training and today the number of hours is about 270 (16%), which is an indication of the actual destruction of the teacher placement system.

Types, length and semantic content of teacher placements should be determined by the industry standards of teacher education and, consequently, become the state norm. It must be noted that under modern conditions

continuous teacher placements cannot be considered without regard to social practice, as it allows for the integration of future experts in public relations system that will protect the teachers from the “contemplative” attitude to life and form an active civil position.

Teacher Education in the Context of “Lifelong Learning Paradigm”

Modern development of teacher education is impossible without the teacher's ability of lifelong learning. Quality education should form the need for constant self-development through formal, non-formal and informal education – from birth and throughout life. There is a transformation of understanding education from “education for life” to the formulation of “lifelong learning” (Зязюн, 2001). This provides a change in the role of man in the modern world, the vision of an ideal education and new requirements put forward to the quality of human capital in accordance with the cultural and spiritual, socio-economic and technological transformations as well as the many challenges of the global, European, national, regional and local levels (Про затвердження Галузевої концепції розвитку неперервної педагогічної освіти, 2013).

In the European Commission's Memorandum on Lifelong Learning (2000) it is pointed out that while forming education policies only formal education was taken into account and the other two categories were not paid sufficient attention. The continuum of lifelong learning makes non-formal and informal education equal in rights objects of the educational process.

Thus, the effectiveness of teacher education development in Ukraine is possible due to the interconnection and synergy between formal, non-formal and informal education. Formal education provides teachers and pedagogues with the change of the educational level and advancement training in postgraduate teacher education institutes, establishments and institutions in accordance with certain curricula and a training period, state certification measures that is proved by obtaining relevant educational documents.

Given the teachers' need for lifelong learning, topical and recognized are becoming the knowledge and skills obtained in the system of non-formal education as an organized systematic educational activity carried out outside the formal pedagogical system, which provides the conditions for self-realization of each specialist, his/her pedagogical improvement based

on the provision of wide opportunities when choosing directions and forms of educational activities in the professional sphere. Experience of developed foreign countries (Great Britain, Australia) confirms that the knowledge gained in informal courses, trainings, workshops and seminars is recognized as a part of formal education and is included into credit modules in the system higher education.

Informal education is carried out outside the standard educational environment, is an individual cognitive activity of teachers and accompanies them in everyday life. The specialist's demonstration of his/her own activities within the cultural-educational environment (communication, reading, visiting public arts and cultural institutions, travelling, etc.) provides the conversion of social educational potentials into effective factors of his/her own personal and professional development. In this context, one should pay attention to the words of German pedagogue A. Diesterweg that "a teacher is only able to really educate and form until he/she works on his/her own upbringing and education" (Диестервег, 1956). At the same time informal education provides the conditions that encourage teachers to search for personal self-identity (a demonstration of personal origin, the determination of their own place in the world based on fundamental moral and spiritual values), professional self-identity (the awareness of "the ego" – the concept of professional formation and development) and cultural self-identity (the self-awareness as the subject of culture and carrier of cultural traditions, the identification with the outstanding achievements of national culture), that results in the forming of professionals' sustainability in a changing world.

Priority Vectors for Teacher Education Development in Ukraine

Consequently, main regulators of teacher education in Ukraine are:

- the recognition of teacher education as a sphere of ensuring human capital – teachers, who must have a high level of professional activity realization, consciously change and develop themselves, make an individual creative contribution to the profession, promote social interest in the results of their work;
- the update of teacher education content based on its standardization and optimal ratio of professional and pedagogical, social and humanitarian, research teacher training, taking into account modern innovative

technologies of learning, that should lead to the forming of an educated, harmoniously developed person able to continuously renew scientific knowledge, professional mobility and rapid adaptation to changes in the socio-cultural sphere;

- the development of variable, diversified curricula in accordance with the levels of higher teacher education (primary (short cycle), first (Bachelor), second (Master), educational and professional (Junior Bachelor) and educational degrees (Bachelor's and Master's degrees) based on the principles of interdisciplinarity (cross-disciplinarity), multiculturalism, variability, multidisciplinary;
- continuous professional development of teachers and pedagogues in the context of formal, non-formal and informal education providing training of acme-professionals with innovative thinking is characterized by the accumulation of new knowledge in the form of innovations being new objective, which is formed during the synthesis of knowledge from different fields.

Teacher education should become a system, capable of self-regulation in line with the challenges of social development, an innovative environment where future teachers can obtain skills and abilities needed to independently acquire knowledge throughout life and apply the knowledge to practice.

Streszczenie: W nowoczesnych warunkach na Ukrainie wykształcenie pedagogiczne, będąc integralną częścią systemu szkolnictwa wyższego, zapewnia przygotowanie przyszłych nauczycieli do bycia świadomymi ich roli w nowym, innowacyjnym społeczeństwie. Istnieje jednak konieczność reformy systemu przygotowania zawodowego. Pomimo pozytywnych zmian w wykształceniu pedagogicznym, w dalszym ciągu istnieją wady zawodowego przygotowania nauczyciela. Można je przezwyciężyć poprzez uznanie edukacji nauczycieli jako sfery rozwoju kapitału ludzkiego; aktualizację treści kształcenia w oparciu o standaryzację; tworzenie zmiennych, zróżnicowanych profili edukacyjno-zawodowych programów edukacyjnych zgodnie z poziomami wyższego kształcenia pedagogicznego; ciągłemu rozwojowi zawodowemu nauczycieli, pedagogów w ramach formalnej, nieformalnej oraz poza-formalnej edukacji.

Słowa kluczowe: wykształcenie pedagogiczne, nauczyciel, pedagog, edukacja przez całe życie

Abstract: Under modern conditions the teacher education in Ukraine constituting higher education provides for teachers' training and pays much attention to their role in the innovative updated society and thus the need in reforming the system of professional training. Despite positive changes in teacher education professional training of teachers still has certain drawbacks. They can be overcome by recognizing teacher education as a sphere that provides with human capital – teachers; updating the content of teacher training based on its standardization; developing variable, diversified curricula in accordance with levels of higher teacher education; continuous professional development of teachers and pedagogues in the context of formal, non-formal and informal education.

Keywords: teacher education, teacher, pedagogue, lifelong learning

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