



ENGLISH TEACHER TRAINING IN BELGIUM AND UKRAINE: THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract. The aim of the teacher training education in Ukraine is to meet the standard requirements of European education. The action requires the training of the qualified specialists who learns English. It is especially important for training teachers of English as a Foreign Language. Today the Ukrainian teacher training process is being integrated into the European educational sphere. Thus the studying of the modern content and English teacher training in Belgium, as an inseparable and the main part of the European educational reforming, and in Ukraine has a particular meaning. Here we define the peculiarities of teacher training in Ukraine and Belgium, show the common and different features of pedagogical education of the countries.

Keywords: teacher training, higher education, vocational education, professional training, educational standards, training direction, qualification, educational course, the Flemish community, the French community.

Introduction

The object of the research is teacher training in higher educational establishments of Belgium and Ukraine. It has been found that foreign language studying depends on the level of teachers training, their competence and ability to use the experience of foreign and Ukrainian scholars.

Today the European education is at the stage of reforming and transforming for the optimization of vocational education system and finding the ways of its improvement. In this meaning the studying of the European educational experience is very important for the Ukrainian system of education, as the country follows the strict course for the integration into Europe.

Many scholars have searched the problem of teacher training, thus the studying of tertiary education in Belgium is still actual that caused the topicality of the research. Pukhovska L. analyzes the tertiary education of the Western European countries. Zadorozhna I. investigates the English teacher training in Great Britain. The scientific sources of Nikolaeva S., Petraschuk O., Braznuk N., Redko V. in the sphere of vocational and methodical work of the foreign language teacher help to denote the competence. The researches of Y. Zakaulova concerning the tertiary education of Belgium in the times of its integration into Europe and Usakova, B. describing the peculiarities of teacher education in vocational school in Belgium and Netherlands are of great importance. Foreign searchers devoted their works to the problem as well. Canale and Swainin «A Theoretical Framework for Communicative Competence» (1981) paid attention to the analysis of the theoretical base for creating communicative competence in future foreign language teachers. Davies Allan, the author of «Communicative Competence as a Language Use» (1989) shared the idea of forming foreign communicative skills and experience.

Taking into the consideration the above mentioned information and the fact that the problem hasn't been investigated completely we describe the main tendencies, indicate the achievements in the content, the methods, make a deep comparative description of training directions, qualifications standards and content of the English teacher training in Belgium and Ukraine. Without them one can't fully understand the system of teacher training in Europe.

Method

The research methods we used are: theoretical and comparative analysis, synthesis, the method of studying educational and historical documents. Thus we discovered and analyzed printed and electronic sources which investigate teacher training in Belgium and Ukraine. We divided the information into several common groups while studying it concerning each of the country.

Results

Having studied the English teacher training in Belgium we made comparative analysis with Ukrainian vocational education. We paid the attention to the following aspects of teacher training: the system of higher education, educational level, standards for English teacher training, institutions for future English teachers, training directions and contents.

Foreign language teachers in Ukraine are trained by 23 pedagogical colleges, 18 pedagogical schools, 2 institutes and 34 universities. The higher establishments of I and II levels of accreditation train the teacher of the educational levels 'Minor Specialist' and 'Bachelor'. The period is 2-4 years. The institutions and universities provide 'Bachelor', 'Specialist' and 'Master' diplomas.

Beginning in 1970 all the educational establishments in Belgium were divided into university (17) and non-university (60) types. University colleges (non-university type) provide students with Bachelor's course, while the structure remains the same. But universities (university level) train the future teachers at Bachelor's and Master's levels. That shows the country refused from the old educational level 'Specialist'. Having adopted the Bologna Declaration of 1999, Belgium directs the educational reform to following European example. Thus we consider it reasonable for Ukraine as a part of European educational community to follow this tendency.

As for the educational standards for English teachers, we found out that the main document in Ukraine is «The Standard of Higher Education». It determines and makes a detailed description of the mechanism for the European system of higher education, defines competences and functions for the teacher training university graduates. According to the Standard the Ukrainian higher establishments have the common position in distribution of the academic hours and the amount of educational courses. Since the standards for the educational 'Specialist' and 'Master' levels haven't been applied yet, one may notice the tendency to the differences between the organization of the teacher training in different higher establishments. They usually modernize old curricula or create the own ones.

Instead the standards and requirements for foreign language teachers in Belgium are oriented on the common European normative documents («The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, and Assessment', the European Qualification Framework»). The papers describe the strict requirements and competence for English teachers; give the differences between an English teacher who is a native speaker and a teacher whose native language isn't English. They also show the skills for a pupil to obtain at the end of studying, apply the recommendations for the improvement of the teacher training quality. Teacher training education in Belgium is connected with the national 'The Decree for Teacher Education' adopted by the Flemish community in 2006. It gives the description of the basic teacher skills which also include the skill to use multimedia technologies and to make a search of methodological and educational information with the help of new technologies. It led to the change in the curricula of teacher training: the academic hours for the forming informative communicative skills were increased and a new compulsory educational course «Informative and Communicative Technologies» was applied (Bilous, 2012).

So there are the differences between the European Qualification Framework and the National Qualification Framework in Ukraine as its part: the last one is concentrated on the main general notions of higher education, ECTS credits and educational levels. The common features are the description of the training directions and the competences for the graduates.

There have been found no strict differences in the training directions of English teacher training in Belgium and Ukraine. The training directions in Belgium are defined according to the structure of education (teacher in kindergarten, primary, secondary and upper secondary school, qualification: the English language). In Ukrainian system of pedagogical education the given qualifications are applied, and one may also obtain the training direction Philology. Language and Literature (the English language).

Having analyzed the educational courses of English teacher training in Belgium we defined the following groups: the courses of psychological and pedagogical, educational, methodical and methodological, specific language directions and courses to choose (Protsko, 2014). Each of the educational establishment for teacher training in Belgium is able to apply not only compulsory but different courses on their choice (Fig. 1).

Thus the students of Higher Pedagogical Institute (Institut Supérieur Pédagogique) and Liege University (the French community) have more academic hours to study the courses of psychological and pedagogical direction (52% and 54% of the entire academic hours), the students of Ghent University (the Flemish community) prefer methodical and methodological disciplines (25%) or courses on choice (25%), and Autonomic High School (the German-speaking community) apply the educational ones (54%).

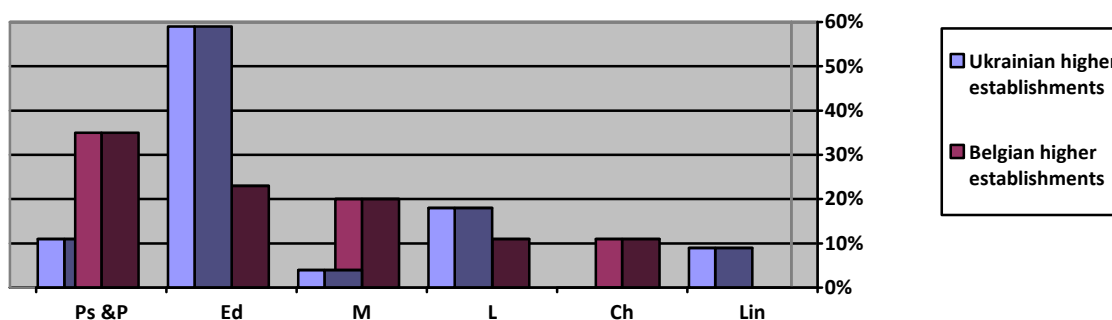


Fig. 1. The Groups of Educational Courses for English Teacher Training in Belgium and Ukraine (the average data)

(Ps & P - the courses of psychological and pedagogical direction, Ed – educational, M – methodical and methodological, L – specific language courses, Ch – courses on choice, Lin – linguistic ones).

The teacher training in Ukraine is held according to the same components. The only difference is that the students are not to choose the courses they want yet. Instead the higher establishments provide linguistic courses. The entire analyzed educational establishments to train the future English teachers pay a great attention to the educational courses 38% (Vasyl Stefanyk Sub Carpathian National University), 62% (H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University), 66% (Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University) and 69% of the entire academic hours (Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University).

We drew a conclusion that a specific language component doesn't contain enough number of academic hours in the Belgian higher educational establishments of the university type (11% of the total amount of hours), and the same component in Ukrainian universities comprises major role in teacher training (18%).

We paid attention to the student teaching as an important part of English teacher training.

School practice for the future teachers in Ukraine includes various types: educational practice, educational linguistic, observation, scientific, work placement, assistant practice etc.

Instead there is no variety and strict differences in types of professional training in Belgian higher educational establishments. The students usually have an educational school practice during the first and second years of studying. During the last year the sandwich model of student teaching is applied: two weeks of school practice is followed by two weeks of studying.

Taking into consideration the fact that the university colleges of the Flemish community implement the education for the future teachers on the qualifications «teacher in kindergarten» and «teacher in a primary school» (the English language), the aim of the professional training is to provide substantial knowledge and skills in 3-4 school subjects but not to train a teacher on the specific direction. The Government provided the conception in order to reduce the number of teachers for specific subjects for the pupils of primary school.

Quite different situation is found in the educational establishments of non-university type of the French community. Having almost the same number of academic hours for the student teaching (the first year of studying – 50 hours, the second year – 180 hours and the third year – 360 hours.) the aim is different: to give students the knowledge in the subject they are to concern the work in school on (Soetart, 1999). They usually obtain the minimum of theoretical knowledge before the school practice because they are to get all the necessary skills during the work with a class. That shows the important difference in English teacher training as in Ukrainian educational establishments students obtain substantial theoretical knowledge before they start working with a class.

We have analyzed the data for the school practice in Ukraine (Fig. 2).

The analysis of Figure 2 shows the divergences in structure and content of student teaching in different Ukrainian educational establishments. The major number of academic hours is for H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University: 1116 h for Bachelor's level, 1242 h for the educational level 'Specialist' and 432 h for 'Master' level. The information confirms the fact that for school practice in the Ukrainian educational establishments we have more academic hours than for the same in Belgium.

We concluded that the school practice in universities includes the attendance of five and conducting of ten classes in secondary and upper secondary school. That shows the common feature in English teacher

training in Belgium and Ukraine. The difference implies in the fact that the professional training in Ukrainian educational establishments starts from the second year of studying. The first step in student teaching is of observation, psychological and pedagogical directions.

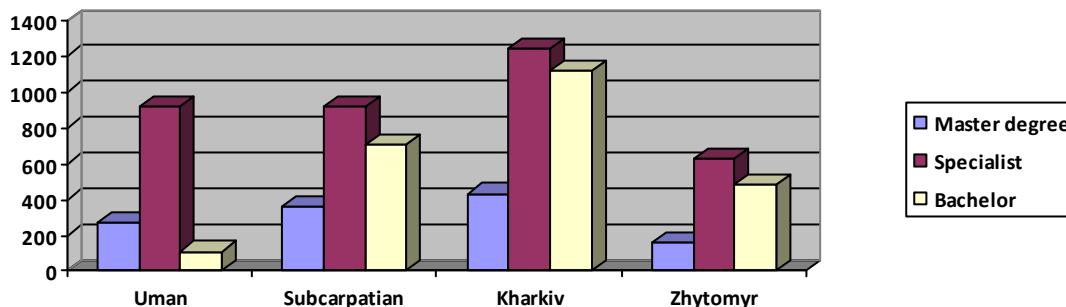


Fig. 2. The Average Data for the School Practice in Ukrainian English Teacher Training
 (1 – Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University,
 2 – Vasyl Stefanyk Sub Carpathian National University,
 3 – H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University,
 4- Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University)

Having analyzed the English teacher training in Belgium and Ukraine we define that the amount of academic hours, the terms for studying, the variety of educational courses and types of school practice have distinctive differences in the given countries. It is resulted from the accordance of the Belgian vocational system to the common European standards and norms, the Bologna ideas, and confirms that the Ukrainian pedagogical education is different in giving students more substantial and profound knowledge.

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