

INDIVIDUAL ASPECTS IN PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS: INNOVATIVE EXPERIENCE OF THE UK

INDIVIDUAL ASPECTS IN PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS: INNOVATIVE EXPERIENCE OF THE UK

The article considers individual aspects in professional training of future language teachers based on innovative experience of the UK. The research findings by Ukrainian scholars on general aspects in professional training of language teachers at higher education institutions in the UK have been generalized. The development and conceptual framework of English studies at the universities in the UK have been justified. The important components of the Subject Benchmark Statement for English have been presented. The relevant recommendations for the national system of language teachers' professional training based on positive aspects of the UK experience have been outlined.

Key words: language teacher, professional training, Subject Benchmark Statement, standards, teaching placement, the UK experience.

У статті розглянуто окремі аспекти професійної підготовки майбутніх філологів на прикладі інноваційного досвіду Великої Британії. Узагальнено результати досліджень українських учених щодо загальних аспектів професійної підготовки філологів у закладах вищої освіти Великої Британії. Обґрунтовано процеси формування, розвитку та концептуальні засади англійських мовних студій в університетах Великої Британії. Охарактеризовано найбільш важливі компоненти освітнього стандарту для спеціальності «Англійська мова». Окреслено відповідні рекомендації щодо вдоско-

налення національної системи професійної підготовки філологів на основі інноваційного досвіду Великої Британії.

Ключові слова: філолог, професійна підготовка, освітній стандарт для спеціальності, вимоги, педагогічна практика, досвід Великої Британії.

В статье рассмотрены отдельные аспекты профессиональной подготовки будущих филологов на примере инновационного опыта Великобритании. Обобщены результаты исследований украинских ученых по общим аспектам профессиональной подготовки филологов в высших учебных заведениях Великобритании. Обоснованы процессы формирования, развития и концептуальные основы специальности «Английский язык» в университетах Великобритании. Охарактеризованы наиболее важные компоненты образовательного стандарта для специальности «Английский язык». Определены соответствующие рекомендации по совершенствованию национальной системы профессиональной подготовки филологов на основе инновационного опыта Великобритании.

Ключевые слова: филолог, профессиональная подготовка, образовательный стандарт для специальности, требования, педагогическая практика, опыт Великобритании.

UDC 378

Ikonnikova M.V.,
PhD in Philology,
Associate Professor
at the Department of Foreign Languages
Khmelnitskyi National University

Problem statement. The prominent trend in the development of modern society is the integration of education systems into a single European and global educational space. On the one hand, this results in the unification of national education standards, the diversification of educational models, and on the other hand, one can observe the efforts of each nation to preserve their historical educational traditions, enriching their innovative experience with that of other countries. Studying the experience in organizing professional training of language teachers in well-developed countries creates new opportunities for improving the system of continuing teacher education in Ukraine under the conditions of its adaptation to the requirements of the European educational space. Therefore, of significant scientific interest are advanced achievements of the countries, which demonstrate a high level of language teachers' professional training in accordance with global standards; promote historical traditions of education, which contributes to their leading role in science and education at the regional and global levels; enhance considerable experience in professional training of language teachers under the new sociocultural conditions.

So, this study will focus on individual aspects in professional training of language teachers in the UK in order to outline its positive aspects, which can be efficiently implemented into the national system of teacher training, in particular professional training of language teachers.

Overview of recent researches and publications. The problem of teacher training in the UK has been studied by many Ukrainian scholars. Thus, its different aspects are covered, namely, N. Aschenyuk (2005) has explored standardization of teacher training in England and Wales; V. Bazurina (2006) has justified professional training of foreign language teachers at higher education institutions in the UK; T. Harbuza (2015) has clarified professional training of future foreign language teachers in the system of distance learning at the universities in the UK; Yu. Kishenko (2000) has studied the process of developing teachers' professional mastery in the system of teacher education in England and Wales; O. Komochkova (2018) has characterized professional training of linguists at the universities in the UK; O. Palckha (2016) has specified the organization of future language teachers' independent learning in the UK; A. Sokolova (2007) has investigated professional

training of teachers in the system of teacher education in England and Scotland; I. Zadorozhna (2002) has revealed the peculiarities of English language teachers' methodical training in the UK et al.

Unrevealed aspects of the problem under study. Despite the abundance of researches on the problem under study in general, they still cannot reveal all the aspects of it, in particular in professional training of future language teachers in the UK. One should also take into account the time range of the conducted explorations, since many of them took place a decade ago. We do not assume to exhaust all the aspects of the problem in the current study. Nevertheless, we will attempt to disclose individual and important aspects in professional training of future language teachers, in particular English language teachers, in the UK based on the requirements of the prominent legal documents, in particular Subject Benchmark Statements designed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).

So, **the research aims** to analyze individual aspects in professional training of language teachers in the UK experience and outline positive aspects that can be efficiently implemented into professional training of language teachers in Ukraine.

Results. V. Bazurina indicates that the European integration processes have significantly influenced the process of teacher training in the UK. The scholar states that the process of reforming school education has resulted in improving the content, forms and methods of foreign language teachers' professional training [2].

As evidenced by the analytical materials on foreign experience of teachers' professional training (2017), in the UK in the early 21st century, the law-making process has focused on increasing social status, improving working conditions of teachers and modernizing teacher training, as reflected in the Government's Green Book "Teachers: Meeting the Challenge of Change" (1998); "Learning and Teaching: a Strategy for Professional Development" (2001); "The National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service" (2001); The Schools White Paper: Higher Standards, Better Schools for All (2006), "Your Child, Your Schools, Our Future: Building a 21st Century Schools System" (2009), "The Importance of Teaching: the Schools White Paper (2010), etc. These documents include the provisions on "improving the quality of teaching and learning by establishing the reliable criteria for evaluating professional activities and professional development of teachers", "increasing the status of various categories of teachers to the highest level of public recognition in order to ensure the most favourable conditions for meeting the main objective – to reveal powerful potential of each child", "identifying new ways of teachers' professional and personal development", "encouraging each teacher, each school to work with lawmakers on the education

transformation, the creative energy liberation, professional talent development", etc. [1, p. 12].

It must be noted that the QAA in the UK has developed Subject Benchmark Statements, which are part of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and include the expectations that higher education institutions are required to meet. The Subject Benchmark Statement for English was initially published in 2000, then reviewed and revised in 2007. The third edition was issued in February 2015.

Interestingly, the study of English Language, like the study of English Literature, has developed only relatively recently at university level in the UK. Until the very end of the 19th century, there was no such subject as "English" in universities, and students who wanted to study the language and literature of a culture took "Classics" – the language and literature of Ancient Greece and Rome, civilizations that were much admired and imitated throughout the Western world. Early attitudes to what was deemed "respectable" within the area of English study can be seen in a pamphlet produced in 1887 by Henry Nettleships, an Oxford University Professor of Classics. This pamphlet, entitled "The Study of Modern European Languages and Literatures at the University of Oxford", rejected the study of English Literature as in any way comparable to classics, but saw philology – the study of the history of language – as just about acceptable. However, philology, as conceived then, was not about the real language of contemporary English speakers or about any aspects of social history (such as language for new inventions or new experiences). It was described as a "science", looking at the history of specific language features [6; 7; 8; 9]. The term "philology" is rather rarely used in modern British scientific discourse, since nowadays it mostly relates to the study of ancient and medieval texts. Instead, in the UK, the term "language studies" is used, that implies studying language and literature combined [4, p. 36].

English as a core academic subject involves studying the structure, history and usage of English, critical analysis of literature written in English, creative writing, past and present cultures, etc. English literature, *English language* and creative writing studied separately or combined are the main three areas of the subject. English language implies studying spoken, written and multimodal communication, their historical development, distinctive levels of analysis (e. g. phonology, grammar, vocabulary). *English literature* includes interpreting and analyzing literary texts, as well as studying history and theory of literature. *Creative writing* involves practical writing, studying literary and cultural contexts of writing, exploring the relationships writing can generate between writer, publisher, text and audience.

According to the Subject Benchmark Statement for English, the English degree aims to: 1) enhance enthusiasm for the subject and appreciation of its past

and continuing social, cultural, political and economic importance; 2) provide an intellectually stimulating experience of learning and studying; 3) promote the understanding of verbal creativity and aesthetic features of literary and non-literary texts; 4) help students to recognize and utilize the expressive resources of language; 5) encourage students to reflect critically upon the acts of reading and writing and on the history of textual production and reception; 6) foster wide and varied reading through a broad and diverse curriculum; 7) provide a basis for further study in English or related subjects and for the teaching of English at all levels; 8) develop a range of subject-specific and generic skills of value in graduate employment, including high-order critical, analytic and research skills and advanced competence in oral and written communication [10].

Professional training of English language teachers is mainly conducted at universities. However, more than 50% of their study time future specialists spend in the schools with which partnership agreements have been concluded. The leading ways of English language teachers' professional training are: 1) three or four years of study at a college within the Bachelor of Education degree; 2) a one-year university-based training programme (PGCE) based on a three-year university-based baccalaureate (e. g. a bachelor's degree in natural sciences, etc.); 3) a school-based teacher education consortium, which implies that professional training of English language teachers (theoretical, practical) should be conducted at school (lecturers attend schools and conduct their courses); 4) a fast-track graduate entry, which functions as an alternative programme, enabling university graduates who wish to work as English language teachers to undergo practical training at schools and obtain a teacher qualification; 5) flexible postgraduate courses, which take into account the individual needs of every student. Importantly, all future English language teachers must undergo teaching placement [1].

As a result, English programs are characterized by different variations. Indeed, some programs combine English literature, language and creative writing, whereas others may focus on only one or two of these fields. The knowledge and practices of other subjects can be incorporated into the intellectual range and diversity of approaches to English programs. In addition, English is often studied as part of joint honours or combined degree programs.

It must be noted that English programs in the UK meet the challenges of integration and globalization processes, since future English language teachers have the opportunity to study all types and varieties of English (national, regional, social, historical and contemporary forms). Also they learn how to characterize and justify the structure, functions and these varieties, as well as reveal the influence of historical,

social, geographical, cultural, political, stylistic and other contextual factors. It is required that future English language teachers master the core sub-areas of the subject, namely, phonetics, semantics, sociolinguistics, dialectology, as well as descriptive, critical, theoretical, corpus-based, forensic or cognitive approaches to exploring the language. In addition, future specialists learn to analyze qualitatively and quantitatively a wide range of texts (from everyday casual spoken communication to highly stylized formal and/or literary written discourse).

O. Palekha states that the main tasks of independent extracurricular activities at higher education institutions in the UK are aimed at achieving an appropriate level of competency in foreign language communication; mastering general and special knowledge, skills and abilities; teaching students how to organize and effectively plan independent learning; enhancing autonomy, flexibility and adaptability of students' thinking, motivation towards independent learning, adequate self-reflection on independent learning; training future language teachers to engage in effective lifelong learning upon graduation [5, pp. 55–56].

T. Harbuza indicates that the model of future foreign language teachers' professional training in the system of distance learning in the UK contains the following structural and functional components: external and internal sociopedagogical conditions for developing distance learning that affect other components of the model – *the target component* (social demand, goals), *the content component* (legal, educational, methodological and technological support, evaluation/assessment), *the pedagogical organization component* (the credit and module system for obtaining a degree, the structure of foreign language teachers' professional training at the International Teacher and Training Center (ITTC), the ways of obtaining the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), different forms of the education process organization) and *the results component*. They are interconnected and create a unified model aimed at developing professional competency of future foreign language teachers [3, p. 144].

As evidenced by the Subject Benchmark Statement for English, future English language teachers should acquire *subject knowledge, skills specific to English, generic and graduate skills*. Within this study, we will focus on the most relevant aspects. Thus, *subject knowledge* involves the following: 1) literature and/or language from different periods; 2) the breadth of literatures in English; 3) regional and global varieties of the English language; 4) the history, structure, levels and discourse functions of the English language; 5) how culture, language, technology, and economics affect how, where and by whom texts are produced and received; 6) critical, theoretical, linguistic and stylistic concepts and terminology, etc. [10].

Skills specific to English encompass the following abilities of English language teachers: 1) the ability to read closely and critically; 2) the ability to analyze texts and discourses and respond to the affective power of language, using appropriate approaches and terminology; 3) the ability to develop independent and imaginative interpretations of literary, critical, linguistic or creative material; 4) the ability to write clearly, accurately and effectively, etc. [10].

Generic and graduate skills imply that English graduates are effective researchers, good communicators, active learners and should be able to: 1) respond creatively and imaginatively to research tasks; 2) initiate projects of their own; 3) test, interpret and analyze information and evidence independently and critically, producing from that analysis cogent arguments and decisive judgements; 4) plan, organize and report to deadline; 5) develop working relationships with others in teams, especially through constructive dialogue; 6) be sensitive to cultural contexts when working with others; 7) adapt to different demands and tasks; 8) evaluate and reflect on their own practices and assumptions; 9) initiate and take responsibility for their own work [10].

It must be noted that the Subject Benchmark Statement for English also contains *benchmark standards*, which include *threshold standard* (the minimum requirement, which the graduates of a bachelor's degree with honours should obtain), *typical standard* (the level of attainment, which the typical student should obtain) and *excellent standard*. Thus, we will consider only their main relevant requirements.

According to *threshold standard*, English language teachers who have obtained a bachelor's degree with honours should demonstrate 1) knowledge of the subject as defined by the breadth of the curriculum; 2) understanding of how critical, analytical and creative approaches produce knowledge; 3) effective communication skills; 4) the ability to conduct independent research and organize relevant information to formulate an appropriate written argument or response [10].

According to *typical standard*, English language teachers should be able to: 1) demonstrate a wide knowledge of the subject as defined in the curriculum; 2) deploy a conceptual grasp of its central concerns; 3) interpret and articulate ideas and values as represented in the subject of English; 4) exhibit an effective command of written English together with a wide-ranging and accurate vocabulary; 5) display confident textual analysis and fluent critical argument, attending to language, structure and form and the role of the reader in the process of communication and interpretation; 6) use independent and self-reflective critical judgement; 7) conduct independent research through self-formulated questions and tasks and organize relevant information to establish an appropriate written argument or response and achieve scholarly standards of presentation [10].

In reference to *excellent standard*, English language teachers should be able to: 1) demonstrate a higher level of knowledge, skills and abilities defined by the curriculum; 2) show evidence of extensive independent reading, originality of thought and expression, and in-depth understanding. In addition, excellent standard displays the specialists' wide-ranging knowledge of the subject and their ability to apply it effectively, demonstrating exceptional critical insight, analytic rigour and creativity [10].

The knowledge of graduates from teacher education institutions in the UK is also determined by a system of requirements, namely, understanding the goals of teaching and learning in accordance with age characteristics of pupils; applying relevant teaching methods taking into account the intellectual potential of pupils; discovering both gifted and average pupils; preparing for the national testing.

Based on the Subject Benchmark Statement for English, it has been found that teaching and learning methods can be drawn from among the following: lectures, seminars, workshops, tutorials, personal supervision, structured online activity, sessions outside the classroom (e. g. performances, field trips), collaborative and independent study, extensive written analysis, direct instruction, active questioning and debate with peers and tutors, peer critique and feedback, models of relevant skills in action. Among assessment techniques the most common are essays, examinations (including unseen, pre-released and "take-away" examinations), independent research projects and dissertation requiring scholarly and empirical research, oral and interactive activity (formal presentations, seminar performance, online discussion, dramatic performance), external placement, work-based learning reports, tasks aimed at developing specific skills (digital literacies, biographical exercises, editing tasks), portfolios of creative and critical writing (fiction, drama, poetry, reflective journals, essay plans, annotated bibliographies, critical reviews, electronic materials (websites, blogs)) [10].

Teaching placement (25% of total study time) is an obligatory element of teacher education in the UK. The British system of teacher training is characterized by two forms of school-based practice, namely, *traditional* (long-term college-based practical training) and *serial* (short-term university-based practical training, which can last half a day, a day, a week). Teaching placement includes attending a school in order to study the peculiarities of the education process, considering and analyzing demonstrative lessons, micro-teaching, self-study activities, etc. During teaching placement, future English language teachers focus on mastering the methods of planning, organizing and managing the education process, as well as self-realization techniques. Teaching placement enhances their readiness to acquire advanced teaching experience [1, pp. 17–18].

Conclusions. So, the study on individual aspects in professional training of language teachers in the UK has allowed drawing relevant conclusions. First of all, despite the abundance of relevant scientific findings on the problem under study in general, it is still imperative to consider its particular aspects, which was the aim of our research. It has been found that the UK's government regularly updates legal framework so that teacher training, in particular professional training of language teachers, may meet the requirements of the present, the challenges of globalization and integration processes, the demands of the modern labor market. It has been specified that the conceptual framework of English studies has been formulated and developed rather recently. Still, the British community has managed to promote English studies to a global and prominent level and make them interesting for applicants. It has been stated that the QAA has developed Subject Benchmark Statement for English, which includes learning outcomes future English language teachers must reach. It has been specified that English as a core academic subject involves studying English literature, English language and creative writing. It has been clarified that this Benchmark Statement provides for subject knowledge, skills specific to English, generic and graduate skills which future English language teachers should acquire during professional training. Importantly, the document outlines benchmark standards, which include threshold standard, typical standard and excellent standard.

Based on the mentioned above, we can confidently conclude that innovative experience of the UK's education system consists in profound elaboration of future specialists' professional competency, since the level-based system of benchmark standards allows them to master the knowledge and skills appropriate for their level, individual needs and personal professional and scientific interests. Simultaneously, they are encouraged and motivated to strive for professional excellence that is also a factor in enhancing their professional qualification. In addition, providing English language students with the opportunity to choose the mode of teaching placement, which is mostly appropriate to them, is rather innovative.

Therefore, the recommendations for enhancing professional training of language teachers in Ukraine are the following: 1) widening the conceptual framework of foreign language studies (English, French, German, Italian, etc.) taking into account the scope of these subjects approved by the European com-

munity, as well as preserving the national traditions, which turned out to be the most effective; 2) elaborating legal framework for professional training of language teachers in Ukraine taking into account the requirements of the modern labour market and allowing future specialists to reach the level of qualification, which is most appropriate to their capability, interests and needs; 3) promoting the establishment of agreements between higher education institutions and schools so that future language teachers may acquire relevant professional teaching experience, efficiently engage in independent learning and lifelong learning, as well as ensuring the relevance of practical teaching experience.

Rather perspective we consider further studies on practical aspects in professional training of language teachers in the UK on the example of higher education institutions, which provide such a kind of training.

REFERENCES:

1. Авшенюк Н., Дяченко Л., Котун К., Марусинець М., Огієнко О., Сулима О., Постригач Н. Зарубіжний досвід професійної підготовки педагогів: аналітичні матеріали. Київ: ДКС «Центр», 2017. 83 с.
2. Базуріна В. Професійна підготовка вчителів іноземних мов у Великій Британії: автореф. дис. канд. пед. наук : спец. 13.00.01. Житомир, 2006. 20 с.
3. Гарбуза Т. Професійна підготовка майбутніх учителів іноземної мови в системі дистанційного навчання університетів Великої Британії: дис. канд. пед. наук: спец. 13.00.04. Київ, 2015. 236 с.
4. Комочкова О. Професійна підготовка фахівців з лінгвістики в університетах Великої Британії: дис. канд. пед. наук: спец. 13.00.04. Хмельницький, 2018. 317 с.
5. Палеха О. Організація самостійної позааудиторної роботи майбутніх учителів іноземної мови у вищих навчальних закладах Великої Британії: дис. канд. пед. наук: спец. 13.00.04. Київ, 2016. 261 с.
6. Eaglestone R. Doing English: a Guide for Literature Students. London and New York: Psychology Press, 2002. 159 p.
7. Goddard A. Doing English Language: a Guide for Students. London: Routledge, 2012. 158 p.
8. Lawrie A. The Beginning of University English: Extramural Study, 1885–1910. London: Springer, 2014. 190 p.
9. Martin Ph. W. English: the Condition of the Subject. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006. 232 p.
10. Quality Assurance Agency. Subject Benchmark Statement. English (February 2015). URL: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-english-15.pdf?sfvrsn=4f9df781_8.