

FEATURES OF FORMATION OF UKRAINIAN EDUCATION POLICY

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The purpose of this paper is to show features of formation of Ukrainian education policy. According to the author, the formation of the national education policy in Ukraine, as the European Union in its time, must find the thin boundary i.e. the balance between unity and dissimilarity of two different education systems such as Soviet education system, which was inherited after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and European education system, which was unified by requirements of the Bologna Declaration. The author examines the features of the formation and development of Soviet and European education systems. Each of them has certain advantages and disadvantages. The author also presents that major educational reforms, which were only started in Ukraine, took place in Central and Eastern Europe in the late twentieth century. This process was caused by the collapse of bipolar world and scores of countries, which were formed in Europe and sought to European values and democratic reforms. Poland, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia and many other new independent states, which paid in full for socialist regimes, began reforms in education, politics, economics and other areas of activity. We can confidently say that the education system in the new founding countries of Europe not only shifted from one model (Soviet model) to another (European model), but rather to achieve high performance in their development.

The author points out that it is necessary to require continuing professional development of all categories of people, from teachers to car drivers. This growth must be accompanied with the received diplomas at the reputable higher educational institutions not only in Ukraine, but also abroad.

Through this paper the author also wants to suggest that the main provisions of national education policy Ukraine is based on Ukrainian national idea. This national idea sounds as «Ukraine is as keeper of harmony between Eastern and Western Europe».

Keywords: Ukraine, educational policy, education, Ukrainian educational policy, the Bologna process.

According to the author, the formation of the national education policy in Ukraine, as the European Union in its time, must find the thin boundary i.e. the balance between unity and dissimilarity of two different education systems such as Soviet education system, which was inherited after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and European education system, which was unified by requirements of the Bologna Declaration.

Balancing between two cultures, Ukrainian educational policy should take into account the following:

1. The education system, which was in the USSR, had its own advantages (pros) and disadvantages (cons).

Pros are:

- High social prestige of teachers and professors; high salaries and decent working conditions for teachers;

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- Modern material and technical base of schools; pre-school facilities;
- Appropriate level of vocational education and training at the secondary school; practice-oriented teaching; vocational training programmes for skilled workers;
- Free education at schools and universities;
- Absence of corruption, the priority of knowledge (i.e. students have to study and don't pay for good grades);
- Profound theoretical foundation, versatility and encyclopedic knowledge;
- Equal opportunities;
- All-round development including spiritual development; educational institutions at all levels did not only give education but also upbringing;
- Lessons topics were literally «spoon-fed» by teachers and lectures, some hours were given to repeat and consolidate materials;

Cons are:

- Ideologizing of knowledge was conducted i.e. only the knowledge which was written into the format of communist ideology was accessible, and other information was simply ignored;
- The system is not oriented to search for knowledge, greater part of the knowledge was handed over «on a silver platter»; predominance of cramming was above the comprehension of materials;
- Standardization of the curriculum, which does not imply the choice for the stronger or weaker students;
- Lack of understanding about connection between acquired knowledge and everyday life;
- Authoritarian atmosphere;
- Very weak foreign languages training;

The main goal of the Soviet education was to raise a person-creator but it was not involved in the preparation of qualified consumers who can use what was created by others. Somebody thinks that this objective was an achievement but others think that it was a drawback.

The author understands that the list of advantages and disadvantages can be extended, and some positions can be even denied. However, in our opinion, the main thing is that the Soviet educational system with the failures and difficulties in organisation of the educational process had enough achievements and advantages, which let this system to be one of the leading education systems around the world.

2. Education system, which is predominated in European countries and united by the Bologna Declaration, has its advantages (pros) and disadvantages (cons) as the Soviet education system. Pros are:

- from a global point of view, the introduction of elements of the Bologna system satisfies Ukrainian interests toward further internationalization and strengthening of European economic, political and cultural relations;
- a two-level system of higher education in the EU, on the one hand, gives a chance to raise the level of professional training. After getting a Bachelor's degree, everyone can develop his/her professional skills in the master course. On the other hand, this system allows the flexibility to change the profile of training, which is very important on condition of growing demand

for specialty. Having a certain numbers of ECTS credits (system ECTS — European Community Course Credit Transfer System), everyone can get extra credits for another profile training.

- The Bologna process is intended for increasing the mobility of teachers and students (i.e. academic mobility). This mobility gives teachers and students a chance to move to inside or outside their own country to study or teach in another institution for a limited time. The mobile students can enter a college in one country and finish it in another country by getting an academic degree.
- The quality of education as a fundamental stone formation, as a basic condition for trust, relevance, mobility, compatibility and attractiveness in the European Higher Education Area; continual improvement and control of quality of education due to the self-appraisal; external international audit quality; accreditation by independent organizations; publicity procedures and results of quality assessment; ensure transparency and financial management of universities.
- Increasing the autonomy and academic freedom with responsibility and accountability of universities; Universities have the right to form their strategies, choose their priorities in teaching and research, spend their money, profile their programs and set their criteria for the acceptance of professors and students.
- Presence of high-quality, flexible and individualized curriculums.
- 30 per cent of courses are offered at universities as required, and 70 per cent of them are as independent. Education at schools or universities is fixed as an appropriate model which allows the students to choose subjects which they like. Thus, it is possible to correct choice (in case of error) taking the next year as an additional course, which the student again sees fit.
- Lifelong learning.

As for the disadvantages of the Bologna Process, the author has analyzed the literature and found, quite to her surprise, that all «disadvantages», which was connected with the introduction of the Bologna process in Ukraine, are the effect of influences of Soviet educational models and the manifestation of mentality of teachers, most of whom received their education in the USSR and did not have a chance to compare the Soviet education system with the European one. For example, the different researchers include to the «shortcomings» of the Bologna process:

- Inability to implement the principle of mobility in modern Ukraine;
- Absolute absence of possibility of free choice by the students;
- It is difficult to check the amount of getting grades during the semester to students;
- Difficult to get the required textbooks and materials for the self-study; low quality material and technical base of universities;
- Restricted access to education;
- A sharp deterioration in the quality of education;
- Big teaching load. Instead of research activities and improve practical skills, teachers have to deduct the teaching load from 860 to 1100 hours per academic year. According to the EU requirements, the teaching load is less than twice, at least.

The rejection of purely knowledge-based approaches in favour of competency, when the theoretical training does not play the important role because skills in working with information environment are in the foreground, are included to advantages or disadvantages of the Bologna process (depending on point of view).

The decision on Ukraine joining the Bologna process adopted in May 19, 2005 at the Ministerial Conference in Europe, held in Bergen (Norway). Ukrainian researcher Evgen Krasnyakov notes that there are a number of problems of Ukrainian higher education in the context of the Bologna process. Among them, he says the following [Krasnyakov, 2015]:

- The excessive number of training areas and specialties are respectively 76 and 584. The best worldwide systems of higher education have 5 times less.
- Insufficient recognition in the community the level of «Bachelor» as a qualification level, its uselessness by the domestic economy. Normally, the admission to the university passes according to the spativity; we do not accept on four-year degree courses.
- The tends to worsen the quality of higher education which grows with time is threaten in the mass dimension.
- The increasing of the gap communication between teachers and employers, between the education and labour market.
- The unwarranted confusion in understanding of specialist and master. On the one hand, there is the proximity of training programs of specialists and masters, their equivalence according to the qualification status, but, on the other hand, they are accredited at different levels in accordance with III and IV.
- We put up with the neglecting of advanced research in educational institutions that are the foundation of university training. Our system of academic degrees is complex in comparison with European, which makes mobility of teachers and researchers in Europe more difficult.
- The solution of the future fate of such widespread level of education as schools and colleges is inadequately to the needs of society and the labor market, despite the fact that their numbers in the state four times greater than high school of III and IV accreditation levels combined.
- The system of further training and retraining, which was well-organized for centralized economy, went to the past. A new system which would satisfy the needs of a market economy in Ukraine is not created. Therefore, there is important European principle «lifelong learning» according to the conditions in our country cannot be fully realized yet.
- The universities of Ukraine do not take on the role of methodological centres, innovators, pioneers of social change, which the country should succeed. The level of autonomy of universities in these areas is much lower than in the European. The educational institutions, which have national status, do not act methodological leaders at the time when their number reached about 40% of the total universities of III and IV levels of accreditation.

The list of disadvantages only adds that in Ukraine only the government dictates to the higher education institutions, what categories they will prepare graduates, and imposes bachelor's degree. All other European developed countries were able

to tie their innovative skills to the basic model and join their education system to the Bologna process. In Germany, for example, there is an academic degree, which is similar to Ukrainian doctor of science, and therefore, there is four, non-three levels degree system at universities. The French also retained four of their current levels, and the Scots have a total of six. A number of universities in the participating countries of the process did not come into the Bologna process such as the University of Oxford or École Polytechnique. Moreover, their education officials never occurred to make them do so because the Lisbon Recognition Convention reserves the right to reservation and partial entry into the process. This is a special benefit for the participating countries to preserve a tradition of education without breaking them and adapting to common conditions.

It is observed that major educational reforms, which were only started in Ukraine, took place in Central and Eastern Europe in the late twentieth century. This process was caused by the collapse of bipolar world and scores of countries, which were formed in Europe and sought to European values and democratic reforms. Poland, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia and many other new independent states which paid in full for socialist regimes, began reforms in education, politics, economics and other areas of activity.

We can confidently say that the education system in the new founding countries of Europe not only shifted from one model (Soviet model) to another (European model), but rather to achieve high performance in their development. Many Ukrainians refuse to get education in Ukraine and they go abroad to study in such countries as Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia. According to Egor Stadnogo, in recent years the number of Ukrainian students, who went abroad to study, increased by one third – from 21.5 thousand to 32.6 thousand people. According to the Society Research Centre, in the past academic year 2012-2013 third of foreign students in Poland were Ukrainian. 6000 321 Ukrainian students studied in the country during the academic year 2011-2012 and there were 9000620 people in the academic year 2012-2013 [Romance, 2014].

Why are Ukrainians interested in education in neighbouring European countries? According to many experts, such as Polish and Czech education is acceptable combination of price and quality. Applicants' higher education institutions in Ukraine have long noticed that the price of education in Ukraine catches up with the European price, but the quality is still unsatisfactory.

In many universities in Ukraine as in Soviet times continue to believe that students have entered a university and they have already belong to the university for all years of the study. Furthermore, this position leads the university administration to the completely unacceptable mentality of European student from a perspective on the educational process. When the university with its staff do not provide quality education, the student take what is given to him/her. That is, Ukrainian students pay for their education virtually the same price as in Europe, but unlike their European counterparts, they do not have the right to choose better education services and guarantee that those education services, which are provided to the students, meet European standards at least.

However, according to Oleg Bazaluk, the main thing that distinguishes the Soviet model of European education is its basis. The basis of any model of education

is achievements in neuroscience and psychology. Both the physics is based on the degree of mathematical language, and at the heart of pedagogical science are the understanding neurobiological and psychological processes. According to Oleg Bazaluk, the Soviet model of education was mainly based on the research of outstanding Soviet school by psychologists Lev Vygotsky and Aleksey Leontiev, and at the heart of education in Europe are mainly studies of Piaget's psychological school. One of the fundamental methodological differences in the approaches of these two schools is the understanding of the fundamentals of mind as really neural networks of subconscious and consciousness are in the brain of every person. Vygotsky and Leontiev's psychological school think that the brain of the baby is Tabula rasa (Latin:

«scraped tablet» — i.e., «clean slate»). And, accordingly, the education system with parents and family environment affecting the brain as a «clean slate» should stamp citizens of its country with ruling elite's mentality (world view) like a cliché. There were different views on the brain of the baby in the Piaget's psychological school. In the vast research material Jean Piaget and his followers have shown that the brain of the baby has already had the corn of personality, beginning of future citizens. Of course, this early development is highly dependent on external social environment. But this dependence is not based on the level of creating something new and desirable for the government, and on the principle of «do no harm». The education system should not create something from scratch, and develops what exists and creates conditions and encourages what was laid in the children from birth. And some coercion, interference in the development of content must only maintain and stimulate domestic individual maturation [Bazaluk, 2010].

Thus, we examined the features of the formation and development of Soviet and European education systems. Each of them has certain advantages and disadvantages, most of which we discussed above. Let's try to formulate the basic provisions Ukrainian educational policy which was based on Ukrainian national idea: «Ukraine is as keeper of harmony between Eastern and Western Europe».

1. Analyzing the modern literature in neuroscience, psychology and philosophy of education compels us to consider the correctness of Piaget's research school — parents' genes manifest in the peculiarities of formation of the child's psyche. This fact is indicated by many studies (e.g. the study by the director of the Institute of Neuropsychology and Cognitive Performance (New York, USA) Elkhonon Goldberg) [Goldberg, 2003]. For this reason the Ukrainian education policy should be based on the recognition of personality's birth i.e. the baby with the nervous system in which is special personal development strategy.

2. Ukrainian education model recognises the fact that babies from birth have inherited individual strategy of internal creative potential which changes the task facing the educational process. Instead of imposing authoritarian ruling ideology in Ukrainian society, Ukrainian educational policy should be based on the principle of

«do no harm»; perform at least three functions:

- to create favourable conditions for the disclosure of individual strategies of internal creative potentials of mind;
- to accompany and encourage the disclosure of internal creative mental potentials of future generations;

- to consolidate individual manifestations of mind, involving them in social and cultural activities of Ukrainian society, which develops, with maximum available means.

3. Priority of individual manifestations in the younger generations, who have them from the birth, fundamentally changes the view of the education system as a tool. By means of them the Ukrainian society interacts with developing new generations. At least, it appears as follows:

- The society in any case does not create and does not press specific ideology on the new generation, and attracts new individual strategies of internal creative potential in solving urgent problems facing its adult members. In other words, partnership relations with the younger generation are formed as early as possible. It enables to integrate forming mind better and more efficiently in civil society and national-cultural environment.

- The education system of authoritarian environment, which always forces and teaches, should acquire the features of parents' house in which children should be happy to gain new experiences and knowledge as at the weekend they visit their grandparents, who always encourage wisely and allow to do almost everything. Training in the educational institutions for every child should turn into an exciting game which is rigged for him/her and he/she is a main player. For greater certainty of this statement I would like to give an example from Airat Dimieva's book about the education system in the United States: «The system provides everything that any child has received an optimal education and thus he/she have never been offended or otherwise not suffered from subjective attitude to him/her by the teacher. Really children's rights are not restricted, and they know it» [Dimiev, 2008: p.10]. In addition, «... students can be not blamed, shamed and, all the more, punished at the American school. The teacher should only affect the student positively encouraging for success. Children can talk, sit in the free position during the lesson» [Dimiev, 2008: p.11].

4. Individual approach to pupils and students requires the following changes in the organization of the education system:

- The best material and technical base of educational institutions. The level of material and technical bases of education in Ukraine are well-known. Let's make a comparison with American institutions. Airat Dimiev writes as regards this: «The first thing, which immediately catches the eye, is the size and equipment of school compared to our school. Schools are huge i.e. there are very large buildings with the large number of students in the USA. The Middle School has a few hundred students typically and High School has a few thousand ... The number of teachers in High School close to two hundred. School equipment makes an impression. Each High School, in addition to spacious classrooms, labs, numerous musical and art workshops, has, for example, the assembly hall of a thousand seats. There are three or four gymnasiums, swimming pool in each school. Moreover, our city stadiums would like to have such a football pitch with good quality turfgrass cover as at American schools. Many schools also have a separate theatre. All paperwork including class registers is computerized. Official correspondence, orders and instructions are performed exceptionally by email. This works so well that the system does not crash anywhere» [Dimiev, 2008: p.10].

- The level training of academic staff. Only those teachers are authorised to work with children who are willing to honour and conscience to give their knowledge

and experience reveal individual strategies of creativity in the younger generations. It is important to establish a connection between teachers performs their duties and how children perceive it. In this context, the idea of the child must come first. If the teacher cannot find a common language with the child, this is a problem for the teacher, but no for the child. The child must not adapt to requirements of the teacher, but rather the teacher as professional, must calculate the child's behaviours and discover his/ her personality traits. On the one hand, he/she can develop further, but, on the other hand, it helps to get respect from the child to build emotional relationships with him/ her. Professional staffs have such behaviour i.e. they give children the opportunity to choose teachers.

– Making high standards of teacher responsibilities, at the same time, need to improve the social status of the academic staff. The teacher- beggar, who always solves financial problems of his/her family, cannot do research with students. Academic staff must belong at least to the middle class and have adequate financial support. The constant competition must be between teachers. On the one hand, this competition cleans up «random» people in education, or people who are not ready to work with the younger generation, on the other hand, encourages and provides an opportunity to further growth of the most gifted and talented members of academic staff.

5. Remove the importance of the language issue. The Ukrainian educational policy, which is based on Ukrainian national idea: «Ukraine is as keeper of harmony between Eastern and Western Europe», requires teaching in three languages such as Russian, Ukrainian and English. Strictly forbid to do a cult from the language. The language is nothing more than the ability to divide while communicating intentions of others. If most of Ukrainian society speaks Russian and Ukrainian, both languages should be used for teaching. However, if for example, in Western and Central Ukraine, most of the population speaks Ukrainian, the main subjects are taught in Ukrainian. Nevertheless, Russian, as the most important language for communication of Ukrainian, is taught as compulsory. If the Russian language dominates in Eastern Ukraine, the teaching is conducted in Russian, but Ukrainian should be compulsory to learn.

English is a foreign language as compulsory in Ukraine. Higher education institutions must give the right to choose a fourth language to learn. For the reason that, each student must have the right to choose what language to learn.

We believe the learning languages should reach levels of the most developed countries, where a bachelor is fluent in three languages, a master speaks four languages and a postgraduate speaks more than four languages. Such an approach, we believe, will provide multilingual cultural and national elite of Ukrainian society.

6. It is necessary to establish an independent public control over the quality of educational services which must correspond to the latest international standards. We have already noted that the structure, which organizes the educational process, still evaluates a quality educational process in Ukraine. Naturally, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine always evaluates its work as «satisfactory», although compared with achievements of relevant Ministries in neighbouring countries such as Poland, the Czech Republic, which are still too far from the world standards, this assessment has long been «unsatisfactory». The work of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine should be evaluated by the independent public organizations (e.g. parent committees, Board of Trustees, employers' organizations,

other ministries, etc.). Educational institutions should not be united under «the one size fits all». Moreover, ratings, which indicated the best and worst institutions, must be as result of permanent transparent monitoring. The fate of «worse» institutions must be decided by relevant committees. Thus, these institutions must either be liquidated or they start to work on updating their image.

7. It is necessary to move away from the «cult» of the diploma. The diploma does not play an important role in leading educational system as in Ukraine. Thus, on the one hand, for example, if we compare Harvard diploma with the diploma of any other provincial university, we observe the real difference in graduate training which is recognized by employers. In Ukraine, for example, the diploma of the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, which is one of the most prestigious in Ukraine, and any other provincial university does not guarantee a different level of professional training of the employee for the employer. An employee, who has a diploma of provincial higher education institution, is often more useful for the enterprise than an employee, who has a diploma of prestigious Ukrainian universities. On the other hand, the degree awarded for Ukrainians is the end of education and then followed by work and only work. Therefore, a received diploma in the youth is mostly the last and the only proof of education of forty-year-old or fifty-year-old employees. Lifelong learning and andragogy is spoken and written only by the narrow circle of specialists.

According to the author, it is necessary to require continuing professional development of all categories of people, from teachers to car drivers. This growth must be accompanied with the received diplomas at the reputable higher educational institutions not only in Ukraine, but also abroad.

Thus, in the paper, the author suggests the main provisions of national education policy Ukraine which is based on Ukrainian national idea: «Ukraine is as keeper of harmony between Eastern and Western Europe».



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