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PROFESSIONAL NECESSITY OR PERSONAL CHALLENGE? THE RELEVANCE OF LEARNING ENGLISH BY PRESCHOOL TEACHERS IN THE CONTEXT OF IMPLEMENTING THE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE OF UKRAINE (2026)

The reform of language education in Ukraine, particularly the mandatory introduction of English into preschool education from 2026, significantly transforms the professional requirements for preschool teachers. English proficiency is becoming an essential element of modern educational standards and a key condition for effective professional performance.

The article outlines the legislative and regulatory framework governing the reform and analyzes the main state documents shaping language policy in early childhood education. English is viewed not merely as a subject but as a tool for developing children's social, cultural, and communicative competencies in a globalized world.

Drawing on contemporary scientific and media sources, the article examines the specifics of foreign language learning by adults, focusing on motivation, psychological barriers, and factors contributing to or hindering successful acquisition. It is emphasized that mastering English by educators is a multi-stage and complex process that requires systemic support.

The article presents the results of an empirical survey among preschool educators from various regions of Ukraine. These findings show that most educators recognize the importance of the reform but simultaneously experience anxiety due to insufficient language skills, limited time, lack of quality resources, and unequal professional development opportunities. Motivational readiness remains high, yet effective implementation depends on structured institutional support.

The study identifies the conditions necessary for achieving the objectives of the reform: access to modern educational materials, regular training and professional development programs, methodological guidance, psychological support, and incentives for continuous language improvement. These measures are vital for strengthening educators' confidence and competence.

The conclusion emphasizes that learning English is both a professional requirement and a personal challenge for preschool educators. However, with consistent support, this challenge can be transformed into a powerful catalyst for their professional growth and for enhancing the overall quality of preschool education and early foreign language learning in Ukraine.