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## EDUCATIONAL INNOVATIONS AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: TRAINING TEACHERS FOR NUŠ

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### НАВЧАЛЬНІ ІННОВАЦІЇ ТА ТЕХНОЛОГІЧНИЙ ПРОГРЕС У ВИВЧЕННІ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ: ПІДГОТОВКА ВЧИТЕЛЯ ДЛЯ НУШ

The article highlights the relevance of the use of educational innovations in the preparation of a future English teacher to work in the New Ukrainian School. The author of the manuscript emphasizes the need to use a variety of innovative methods and best European practices in the educational process with students of Pedagogical specialties of higher education institutions; considers the numerous opportunities and new mechanisms for teacher professional growth and retraining of pedagogical staff, which include certification and a "money after teacher" mechanism. The researcher claims that the digitization of all spheres of society and the popularity of information technologies in the world have taken a prominent place in the education sector, in particular they are an integral part of teaching English all over the world at different levels. The author analyzes which innovations in the English language teaching help educators create more independent students who are motivated to learn new content and to get good learning outcomes. The article partially describes the experience of using innovations on the example of students of the Pedagogical Faculty at the SHEI "Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian national University".

**Key words:** educational innovation, teacher training, the English language lessons, primary school students, New Ukrainian School.

**Анотація.** У статті висвітлюється актуальність питання використання навчальних інновацій під час підготовки майбутнього вчителя англійської мови для роботи в Новій українській

школі. Авторка рукопису акцентує на потребі використання різноманітних інноваційних методик та передових Європейських практик у навчальному процесі зі студентами Педагогічних спеціальностей закладів вищої освіти; наголошує на численних можливостях і нових механізмах професійного зростання вчителів, перепідготовки та перекваліфікації педагогічних працівників, які передбачають сертифікацію та механізм "гроші за вчителем". Дослідниця стверджує, що діджиталізація всіх сфер суспільства та популярність інформаційних технологій у світі зайняли чільне місце в освітньому секторі нашої країни, зокрема вони є невід'ємною частиною вивчення англійської на різних рівнях. Авторка аналізує, які саме інновації у навчанні англійської мови допомагають педагогам сформувати більше незалежних і самостійних учнів, які є вмотивованими опанувувати новий контент та отримувати хороші навчальні результати. У статті частково описано досвід використання інновацій на прикладі студентів Педагогічного факультету ДВНЗ "Прикарпатський національний університет імені Василя Стефаніка".

**Ключові слова:** освітні інновації, підготовка вчителів, англійська мова, учні початкової школи, НУШ.

**General problem setting.** Every year we observe a change of trends in almost all sectors and the case is no exception in the field of education. This is one of the areas we see a lot of remarkable changes every year. According to the Ministry of education and science in Ukraine, 2019 became a year of development and growth for all levels of education from schools and vocational institutions to higher education institutions.

Digitalization of all spheres of society and the popularity of information technologies in the world have taken a prominent place in the life of our country and have announced the beginning of new changes in the country. In recent years, higher education as well as general secondary in Ukraine has undergone significant changes, a number of important reforms are underway and even more are still ahead. There is a characteristic tendency and necessity to increase innovation in the process of teaching staff preparation. The word "innovation" is used to describe a product or development that is "new" or "enhanced" in some way. Both the modern pupils of the institutions of general secondary education, and the students of higher education are no longer the same as those who considered the teacher and the book the only source of knowledge. Thus, the traditional approach to teaching / learning is not suitable for them.

The purpose of the article is to observe and analyze educational innovations in English language teaching; review the experience of using best samples of technological advancement in teaching practice with students in the context of training educators for New Ukrainian School.

**Analysis of researches and publications.** Ministry of education and science of Ukraine has identified 10 priorities in education for 2019 where Ex-Minister Liliia Grynevych declared it during the final press conference "MES Work: Results of 2018 / Vision of 2019" (URL : <https://mon.gov.ua/ua/mediagallery/pidsumkova-pres-konferenciya-na-temu-roboty-mon-pidsumki-2018-goviziya-2019-go>). Nowadays many innovations are

obvious and visible for primary school students, their parents and, of course teachers.

**Outline of the main research material.** The point is that not all the teaching staff on different levels of education institutions is ready for quick and successful changes in the education sector as teachers' readiness for innovations leaves much to be desired. The experience shows some teachers are not fully ready for such changes; they do not want to admit that former way of teaching is not appropriate under contemporary conditions. The survey of 22 interviewed headmasters from Ivano-Frankivsk conducted during the annual August Educational Conference 2019 at the "Centre of Innovative educational technologies PNU EcoSystem" showed different attitudes to priorities in education sector (*See Drawing 1*).

Educators are, of course, a key and integral element of the teaching / learning ecosystem. That is why it is important to familiarize them with present generation competencies and skills so that students can experience the best of the technologies available now. This simply pushes the need for professional development programs where they can get better acquainted with the innovative teaching-learning pedagogies as well as enhance their personal thinking abilities. Thus, only teachers who have passed advanced modern trainings successfully or been properly trained at Pedagogical Faculties, who study under updated educational programs and in appropriate educational spaces will meet contemporary needs of all the participants of the educational process. According to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, which offers new

available online and teachers can get certificates of a successfully completed advanced online training as well. Analyzing such possibilities for Ivano-Frankivsk region there are several big locations which offer certified advanced modern training programs for teachers: traditionally popular Ivano-Frankivsk Regional Institute of Postgraduate Teacher Education and newly created "Centre of Innovative Educational Technologies PNU EcoSystem" at the SHEI "Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian national University".

Hence, we deeply understand the relevance of the problem of preparing future foreign language teachers of New Ukrainian School for innovative activities and the use of new methods and technologies in teaching, aware of new educational trends. A modern educational establishment is an institution of competences. In addition, competency-based learning is not an easy challenge for schoolteachers and university academic staff. Taking into account the principles of competency approach, the essence of education is the development of abilities and skills that will contribute to independent problem solving in different activities based on the use of social experience.

In 2016, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, 10 basic skills of the future were emphasized. Many researchers often call such skills as XXI century skills or soft skills. They form a super-professional, "flexible", competent, competitive personality to survive and achieve success in contemporary society. This list outlined the most significant skills and abilities: comprehensive multi-level problem solving, critical thinking, creativity in the broad sense, collaboration or team work, emotional intelligence (EQ), ability of decision making or new ideas generating, ability to communicate and negotiate, cognitive flexibility, readiness for lifelong learning and others (*Romanyuk, 2016, p. 9*). Most of these skills overlap with ten key competences of New Ukrainian School and can be successfully developed during English lessons. Half of these skills are related to the ability to communicate, understand people, and the second half indicates the ability of the brain: the ability to think quickly, come up with solutions to problems, generate new ideas, etc. These things seem obvious. Moreover, they are in demand nowadays. Nevertheless, in a few years they will become even more necessary (*Andretta, 2007, p. 7*). This definitely is

### Чому Ви віддаєте пріоритет у навчанні?



Mentimeter

22

Drawing 1

Major priorities in education

The results state that innovations and digitalization (that is an innovation) are important for the respondents as they give these two aspects the second and the third places respectively. However, they hesitate in their decisions and relevance of some innovations. What they all agree with, is that XXI century students and modern society demand teachers with globally extended vision of teaching/learning process, those who will be able to develop in them ten key competences singled out in the Conception of New Ukrainian School. Moreover, what may be innovative in a rural primary school of our country in a developing country or even in urban school is an old practice. We can define innovation as an improvement, a change; something new or something that did not exist before; something that is new in a specific context; all of the above combined or any of the above, but only when successfully implemented.

mechanisms for teacher professional growth "money after teacher", pedagogues will get undeniable possibilities to freely choose the institution to get such an advanced training and the program that they find the most appropriate and interesting. Besides, the government will give a certain amount of money to motivate and encourage teachers to learn and use innovations in practice. School authorities are also taking initiatives to organize such programs and training for their staff of all level classes to help them make an impact on the present learning trends. Surprisingly, the trend is now seen in both private as well as public sector educational institutions. The Internet has also made possible for teachers to connect with other teachers to seek or exchange knowledge that will make a difference in their lives and in the lives of those they teach. A wide range of professional development courses is

not the complete list of important skills; however, while preparing future English teachers we must not ignore them.

An important sign of the changing society is personalization: the transition to student-centered learning: educational technologies for personal trajectories in learning. The goal of the higher education institution is to prepare the teacher who is able to evaluate not only knowledge but also skills, to build project work, to conduct individualized learning, to be able to create new creative teams, to teach children in the mercantile world to volunteer. Digital tools and numerous electronic education resources help a lot in arranging personalized learning. This is a notable trend of the year as students can learn without worrying about device, location and timing constraints. Here, more flexible seating or spacing helps a lot. Some of us may wonder if this is something very important to education. In fact, research has suggested that it can have a remarkable impact on the way students perceive knowledge. Understanding its significance, education institutions have started giving learners choices to choose the way they like to be seated in a classroom. It is obviously amazing when the classroom is divided into spaces or zones where students can use transformable desks, large pillows, bucket chairs, etc., unlike the traditional classroom set up. From our personal experience we can firmly state that such settings encourage better learning outcomes and increase motivation to study. "Centre of Innovative Educational Technologies PNU EcoSystem" at the SHEI "Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian national University" offers the students this opportunity to perceive information in a less formal way, have fun during serious learning process. It is after all about the freedom students experience, which in turn changes the way they see education.

Taking into account frequency in using gadgets in teaching / learning process of English lessons and everyday life of students many educators are concerned about a short-term attention span that has become an issue in the education sector. This is, in fact, a much-discussed area in the digital transformation trends in the field of education. Sometimes students struggle a lot to cope with the long information, complicated intense texts, etc. The learning content has not been very interactive, which reduced learning abilities in students. Now, the education sector has started understanding the

unique learning needs of every student. The development of mobile technology and the increase of smartphones usage has enabled many of us to access the internet and use a huge variety of learning apps on the go. Teachers are now able to incorporate mobile learning to reduce the intensity and increase the effectiveness of learning. This trend is growing at fast pace and putting forward options for teachers and even school authorities to better organize the daily school activities. This even provides additional options like sharing student results between peers or other teachers or even parents in real time or track the completion of home works easily. Teachers can also use it as a domain to alert students about some potential issues or use it to easily evaluate if their teaching strategies are working through polls.

Undoubtedly, assessment is the driving force of learning. However, competence learning requires updated approaches to assessment as well. The traditional model is not at all suitable for objectively evaluating students' learning outcomes. On the one hand, continuous assessment is a combination of summative and formative assessment, where formative assessment is characterized as assessment for learning, and refers to those conducted by teachers and students, and provides information that is used as feedback to change the learning process or learning activities in which they participate. On the other hand, the goal of summative assessment is to evaluate students' learning at the end of an instructional unit or subject by comparing it against some standard or benchmark. In real practice, continuous evaluation often comes down to cyclical, fixed-marking, with little or no feedback from the audience. It is important that the assessment method used should allow the teacher to check whether the learning outcomes are achieved or not. In fact, students will get a personalized feeling of the outcomes as these techniques are adaptive, which is another reason why more and more teachers now largely choose formative assessment tools over the routine traditional approaches. The range of skills that modern assessments attempt to evaluate is quite broad and reflect our current views on teaching and learning. It might for example include assessing the students' ability: to participate in a pair work oral activity, skim a text and quickly look for key information, tell a story, follow teacher's instructions at the lesson, plan

and organize a roleplay, write for a specific group or genre and much more. Our students are already familiar with such tools for formative assessment as Kahoot, Mentimeter, Flipgrid and more; moreover many of them already use them in their teaching practice at schools.

Technology is very much part of English language learning throughout the world at all different levels. Innovations in English Language Learning Technologies help create more independent learners who stay motivated and get the results they are looking for. When we discuss the problem of using innovations in English language teaching, some popular digital platforms come to our minds: Google Classroom, Go-Lab, Edmodo, Moodle and more. These and other digital platforms help teachers and students to create a space in which teachers and learners can connect, ask questions to enhance learning, host classes on the cloud and create purposeful contents and conduct different types of assessment.

We cannot organize a perfect English lesson without using authentic information in our everyday practice. Nowadays there is a variety of digital resources for authentic materials to be used in the English language classroom: Youtube, Edpuzzle, GoNoodle, and other resources will help find necessary videos on a specific topic and appropriate level of language knowledge.

Another important innovation we attempt to acquaint our future English teachers with is a Virtual and Inquiry Based learning environment in educational technology. It is a platform of digital courses of study, usually within educational institutions. Unfortunately, not many Ukrainian institutions can boast of having and using such platforms. Besides, "the universal application of digital devices, in particular, requires from educators themselves to develop their own digital competence. A great number of present primary and secondary school teachers have insufficient digital skills ... With the aim of forming some elements of teachers' and students' digital competence, training "Methods of Inquiry based learning of STEM subjects: inquiry learning space and tools" was held on the base of Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian national university by the coach Olga Dziabenko, a researcher, certified trainer who regularly speaks at conferences and workshops, runs numerous projects at the University of Deusto in Bilbao, Spain. Within November 8–9, 2017 students and

the teaching staff of the PNU got excellent opportunities to get acquainted with Inquiry Based Learning, instrument tools of Go-Lab ecosystem: online laboratories, inquiry learning spaces (ILS), existing apps and active learning tutorials..." (Blyznyuk, 2018, p. 42).

Thus, as experience shows, virtual and inquiry based learning environments allow the teacher to organize the learners into groups and roles, present resources, activities and interactions within a lesson structure, provide for the different stages of assessment, report on participation; and have some level of integration with other institutional systems.

The project of the European Union ERAZMUS + CA2 Higher Education Opportunity Project: Modernizing Educational Higher Education Using Innovative Teaching Tools (MoPED) – No. 586098-ERP-1-UA-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP launched at the PNU in 2017 is one step in the direction of using educational innovations in the preparation of a future English teacher to work in the New Ukrainian School. Experts believe, it will have a positive impact on the quality of higher pedagogical education. The project was initiated to meet many challenges by contributing to the modernization of UA pedagogical curricular by creating and introducing new academic disciplines, arranging modern innovative classrooms throughout certain Ukrainian higher educational institutions (Blyznyuk, 2018). The newly created "Centre of Innovative Educational Technologies PNU EcoSystem" has already started to offer certified advanced modern training programs for teachers to enhance their professional level by incorporating new subjects of top-notch ICT teaching tools and inquiry methods.

Institutions of higher education are constantly seeking techniques that encourage students to become more globalized in their perspectives. Universities' administrations and Ministries of education encourage students to participate in numerous international exchange programs. Emphasis on academic internationalization is one of the driving forces factors of higher education reform in Ukraine and in the world. In accordance with the Mobility Strategy of European Space of Higher Education Area 2012, countries are encouraged to develop and implement national strategies for internationalization and mobility (Blyznyuk, 2019, p. 8).

The starting point for this process is

proved in the speech by Hanna Novosad, the Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine who announced, "Integration into European science would continue. In particular, an agreement will be signed over the next year with the EU on joining the Horizon Europe framework program, which will allow our scientists, along with European ones, to participate in various projects" (URL : <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/en/news/ganna-novosad-planuyemo-zmyniti-sistemu-finansuvannya-vishiv-ta-priyednatisya-do-ramkovoyi-programi-horizon-europe>).

**Conclusions and perspectives for further research.** Even after the technological advancement, rather than preparing the students to move the technology forward, Ukrainian education sector has remained hesitant to adopt some innovative trends into practice. We completely agree to it; the education sector is not usually the fast adopters of the technological changes. That is the sole reason why progress remains hesitant and slow in education but it has yet not stopped. Universities have started introducing new academic disciplines to acquaint students with innovations and best European practices to prepare them to be creative English teachers for new generation of students in New Ukrainian School. The education sector has always been the last to make extensive changes holding onto old teaching practices. However, with digital transformation in education, teachers are incorporating new advanced features.

We attempt to conclude, contemporary students are becoming less interactive with the standard of old teaching methods that is why innovations and digital transformation is the key to their interest today. Definitely, the process of preparation of bright English lessons with the use of innovative teaching tools takes a lot of time and effort but it will surely drag to good results and achievements.

We find it relevant to continue researching and grounding innovations in English language teaching and preparation of future English teachers to work in the New Ukrainian School as innovations are very dynamic and it seems hardly possible to catch up with them.

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