
PEDAGOGY

Secondary education reform in Ukraine: concepts and drafts (1988–1991)

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Abstract. The article covers the reasons of creation, the content of the concepts and drafts of other normative documents regarding the secondary education reform in Ukraine during 1988 – 1991. It is argued that this period is marked by a wide-ranging movement of the Ukrainian educators struggling for the development of the national secondary education within the Soviet authoritarian political system. The obtained historical and pedagogical knowledge regarding the outlined phenomenon enriches the pedagogical source study and has an important theoretical significance for further development of the Ukrainian school.

Keywords: *secondary education reform, concepts and drafts of normative documents, Ukrainian school, pedagogical source study, Ukraine.*

Introduction. At present the priority line of the state policy in Ukraine is to reform secondary education in the course of European demands. The following regulatory documents prove it: the Concept of secondary school of Ukraine prepared by the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine (2016), the Concept of the Ukrainian Education Development for 2015 – 2025 (2016), the Concept of the New Ukrainian School (2016), the Law of Ukraine *On Education* (2017), and other documents. Therefore, analysing the available sources it is very important to understand the national history of school education reform taken place in 1988 – 1991 when Ukraine was still a part of the Soviet Union, and the Ukrainian democratic secondary school was being restored under conditions of the authoritarian political system.

A brief review of publications on the topic. A historiographical review of literature has showed that the problem of school education reform taken place in 1988 – 1991 was studied by such Ukrainian scientists as L.V. Kuznetsova and L.D. Berezivska [9; 1; 2] in the historical-political and historical-educational dimensions. At present the topical aspect which should be studied is to understand individual or collective concepts and drafts of other normative documents, which contained alternative ideas on the prospective vectors of secondary education development in Ukraine.

The purpose of our article is to analyse the concepts and drafts of other normative documents regarding secondary education reform in Ukraine during 1988 – 1991 published in periodicals in order to obtain historical and pedagogical knowledge on the mentioned phenomenon and enrich pedagogical source study.

Materials and methods. A set of methods (historiographical analysis, source study approach, synthesis, generalisation, chronological method) were used in the process of studying the concepts and drafts of other normative documents regarding secondary education reform in Ukraine during 1988 – 1991 published in periodicals.

Research findings. First of all, let us consider the factors which made it possible to develop important normative documents, although we wrote about it in our publications earlier [1; 2]. In 1984 the Soviet government reformed secondary and vocational schools, but the problem of school education crisis was not solved. Restructuring

of society (1985) led to the revival of democratic tendencies in education; in particular the social-pedagogical movement of collaboration pedagogy struggling for renewal of education on humanistic and democratic principles appeared. Such principles of education development as democratisation, publicity and self-government were declared at the Soviet Union level. Due to democratic tendencies in 1988 – 1991 an effective reorganisation of education was proclaimed and supported; it was based on such principles as democratisation, deunification, ideologisation and a national principle. The Ministry of Education of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (Ukrainian SSR) reformed school education in the context of the Law *On languages in the Ukrainian SSR* (1989) and the Declaration of State Sovereignty (1990) aiming at creating a national system of school education in the following areas: development of national education legislation; revival of the Ukrainian school. The educational policy was based on the ideas of the Ukrainian educators and scientists (to legalise compulsory study of the Ukrainian language; to recognise officially pedagogical innovation; to exclude formalism and bureaucratic style of school management; to introduce individual approach to pupils, and other ideas).

It is important to note, that at that time the Republican Council of the Pedagogical Society and the Soviet pedagogical *Radianska osvita* (Soviet education) newspaper announced a *National School* competition, inviting teachers, scientists and parents to participate in it. The editorial staff of this newspaper raised the following questions: What should be done in order the Ukrainian school educates youth up to the level of education systems of developed countries?; What and how to teach in a national school?; How to maintain the development of a national school on the principles of democracy and discipline, where pupils are respected as well as teachers are?; How to get rid of conservative ideas of teachers?, etc. The editorial board expressed the following ideas concerning the concept of secondary education development: an important structural component of the concept should be to define the ways how to increase the role of a national school as a main constituent part of cultural life of the society... And the important item is to reorganise school taking into consideration the Ukrainian national culture,

traditions and customs [5, p. 1]. As a result a lot of proposals and drafts were sent to the editorial board; all of them were passed to the Research Institute of Pedagogy of the Ukrainian SSR and the Ministry of National Education of the Ukrainian SSR for consideration in order to develop the Republican concept.

One of such drafts of the concept of the Ukrainian secondary school was prepared by the working group (8 teachers, such writers as D.S. Cherednychenko and H.M. Kyrpa, such Professors of Kyiv State University as A.H. Pohribnyi and A.M. Aleksiuk, and Associate Professor of Kyiv Teachers' Training Institute of Foreign Languages P. Yushchuk) headed by V.V. Strelko, the Director of Hnidyn secondary school, Boryspil district, Kyiv region. The authors of the draft suggested a three-level model of 11-years secondary school (the 1st one is a primary school (1 – 4 forms); the 2nd one is a basic school (5 – 9 forms) where pupils were supposed to choose some optional subjects; the 3rd one is a secondary school (10 – 11 forms); pupils of the 9 – 11 forms were supposed to study such optional subjects as Fundamentals of Housekeeping, Bible as a Monument of the World Culture, and undergo practical training at a farm during a year). It was indicated that “an important condition for school development is maintenance of national traditions” [7, p. 1].

Special attention should be given to a draft of Kirovohrad regional department of the Educational society of the Ukrainian SSR prepared by V.I. Kayukov, a teacher of the Ukrainian language and literature. Taking into consideration V.O. Sukhomlynskyi's ideas he suggested a model of 11-years national school in the form of a lyceum, gymnasium or special school, “which will shape the historical memory of pupils, develop national culture, teach them the humanities, and, of course, prepare pupils to work in all production spheres”. V.I. Kayukov wrote, “I dream of a national secondary school with profound study of the Ukrainian studies. Such a school will be able to solve the problem of national revival.” [4, pp. 1 – 3].

R.P. Skulskyi, PhD (Education), Head of the Department of Educational and Social Sciences of Frankivsk Regional Advanced Teachers' Training Institute prepared a draft of the Carpathian region; he grounded the necessity (spiritual crisis, school crisis), preconditions (peculiarities of the Carpathians region of Ukraine), main principles (equality of all citizens to be educated, public nature of education, priority of funding school, providing material support to school, decentralisation of education management system, democratisation of school life, priority status of the state Ukrainian language, diversity and differentiation of educational establishments, national character of educational activity), peculiarities of education (national one by its content), main objectives (deideologisation and depoliticisation of educational process, priority of universal values, democratisation of pupil's individual, humanitarisation of the content of education, education through work, moral and aesthetic education, etc.), structure (the 1st level is a primary school (1 – 4 forms); the 2nd one is a basic school (5 – 9 forms); the 3rd one is a secondary school (10 – 11 forms)) and content of education of the Ukrainian national school (mastering the fundamentals of national and world culture, priority of studying the native language and literature, history and geography of

Ukraine, national peculiarities of the Ukrainian people, and others) [8, p. 1].

The Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on 16 July 1990 positively influenced the national revival of statehood, culture, and education; as a result there were important transformations in school education. The Soviet pedagogical *Radianska osvita* (Soviet education) newspaper wrote about the following transformations: content of education was renewed (curricula, textbooks); teachers were suggested to analyse curricula, primers and readers, and withdraw those texts the content of which was out-of-date; while preparing textbooks the emphasis was made “on the national peculiarities of people living in Ukraine”; the amount of folklore material was increased; teachers were allowed to fill educational process with the information about their native region; 367 schools where pupils were taught in Ukrainian were opened and repaired; there was an increase in the number of hours for studying the Ukrainian language and literature; classes in Russian-language schools were divided into groups for studying the Ukrainian language and literature; children of Moldovian, Hungarian and other nationalities were obliged to study the Ukrainian language; there were three variants of the Ukrainian literature curricula (at teacher's choice) which included the works of those writers who had been taken off the literary process; more than 700 optional groups were organised at schools to study Bulgarian, Crimean Tatar, Polish and other languages of national minorities; the concept of pedagogy of ethnology was developed; there were such subjects as Ethnology, Native Land, Ethnography and Folklore of Ukraine (at pupil's choice) [14, pp. 1 – 2].

In August 1990 the Soviet pedagogical *Radianska osvita* (Soviet education) newspaper published a draft of the Concept of the national secondary school of Ukraine approved by the Ministry of Education of the Ukrainian SSR on 10 August 1990 and prepared by the research team of the Research Institute of Pedagogy of the Ukrainian SSR in order to discuss it at the August Teachers' conference [13, fol. 87 – 88].

Let us analyse the draft of the Concept which contains the following sections: Purpose, objectives and structure of secondary school; School and national culture; Content of secondary education; Educational process; School management; Conditions for the concept realisation. It was the first document created in the context of transition period: Ukraine became an independent state. Above all, it proclaimed the following advanced and perspective directions for reorganisation of schools in Ukraine (in the document the Ukrainian SSR was mentioned): “...realisation of the idea of nationality teaching positive traditions of national cultures of the Ukrainians and other people living in Ukraine, revival of the role of schools in the process of development of culture”; “democratisation of school life, transformation of school from a departmental ideological establishment into a state public institution; development of independent actions; involvement to participate in school policy; individualisation of educational process, i.e. to take into account abilities, aptitudes and interests of children, their intellectual, physical and mental development; differentiation, i.e. variability of

content, forms and methods of training and education” [6, p. 1].

School was supposed to be structured as a unified, labour oriented and polytechnic one on the basis of the ideas of humanism, democracy and internationalism. The following school education structure was proposed: the 1st level is a primary school (3 – 4 (5) years of schooling); the 2nd one is a basic school (5 years of schooling); the 3rd one is a secondary school (lyceum, gymnasium, college). To our mind, the chapter under the title *School and national culture* is a promising one where a school is declared to be a leading factor in teaching national culture and traditions. As it is mentioned in the document, a school should lay the foundation of national identity, teach to love native language, respect people, national history and culture. The document summed up the results of the Soviet educational policy: “Neglecting of national feelings caused a deformation in school policy; school has lost its function responsible for teaching national culture” [6, p. 2].

A national component (pupils should know native language and literature, history, traditions, customs, ideals, origin and peculiarities of native culture) was introduced into the content of education. It was planned to resume the local history work. At the same time, “the republican component” of the content of secondary education included the language of international communication of the Soviet people as “a necessary condition for international unity of the Soviet people”; the chapter under the title *School management* contained inner-system changes only (amplification of school rights, teachers’ rights, financial stimulation for teachers, revision of correlation between inspector and diagnostic functions of school management, focus on all-Union legislation, etc.). In general, the document was an important step on the way to school education reform, a base of its future development.

The USSR draft law *On Education* prepared in accordance with the Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine and the Law *On Economic Independence of the Ukrainian SSR* was discussed at the August teachers’ meetings. It was based on the following principles: continuity, accessibility, democratisation, connection with national culture, independence from political, social and religious organisations [11, fol. 90].

The Ukrainian pedagogues published their ideas concerning the formation of a national education system. H.H. Filipchuk wrote, “...a national school should be developed on the basis of mutual aid, respect for native language, history, culture, traditions... A school is able to educate a benevolent and civilised person only through restoring the lost spirituality, national consciousness, enriching oneself with achievements of other nations” [10, p. 12]. In August 1990 the Minister of Education I.A. Ziaziun presented his point of view regarding school education reform, “...if a teacher is not respected, a society cannot be prosperous”; pupils should be educated in their native language; “a school should be free from politics; a school must be labour oriented, polytechnic, scientific and aesthetic one. [3, p. 1 – 2].

The USSR draft law *On Education* defined education as a priority sphere of socio-economic development of society, “based on the principles of humanism, democracy, national consciousness, mutual respect between nations” [12, fol. 26]. The document declared the following main principles of education: humanistic, democratic, accessible education and equality of conditions for the full realisation of pupils’ abilities, talent, intellectual development; priority of universal spiritual values over political and class interests; connection with national history and culture; independence of education system from political, social and religious organisations; secular character of education; scientific character of education; integration with science, production and international education; flexibility and practicality of education; equivalence of state administration and public self-government education; continuing education. The USSR Law *On Education* was adopted on 23 May 1991.

Conclusions. Thus, it was found out that periodicals published during 1988 – 1991 (the Soviet pedagogical *Radianska osvita* (Soviet education) newspaper, *Radianska shkola* (Soviet school) magazine, the Bulletin issued by the Ministry of National Education of the Ukrainian SSR, and others) are an important source for studying the history of national secondary education reform taking place during the mentioned chronological period. The analysis of the concepts (collective and individual ones), drafts of other normative documents (public, alternative public ones) gives us the grounds to assert that this period is marked by a wide-ranging movement of the Ukrainian educators struggling for the development of a new national secondary education within the Soviet authoritarian political system. The educational policy was based on the ideas of the Ukrainian pedagogues, scientists (to legalise compulsory study of the Ukrainian language; to recognise pedagogical innovation officially; to exclude of formalism and bureaucratic style of school management; to introduce individual approach to pupils, and others) and their alternative drafts. These documents vary in their structures, but as a rule, they contain the following components: structure and content of secondary education, types of secondary schools, principles of education and training, and others. The Concept of secondary school developed by the Institute of Pedagogy of the Ukrainian SSR and adopted by the Ministry of National Education of the Ukrainian SSR is marked by its systematic character (aim, objectives and structure of secondary school, school and national culture, content of secondary education, educational process, school management, conditions for realisation of the concept). The ideas expressed by the Ukrainian teachers underlay the Ukrainian SSR Law *On Education* adopted on 23 May 1991. After the proclamation of independence of Ukraine on 24 August 1991 they continued to reform secondary education on the basis of national, democratic and humanistic principles in the context of the Ukrainian state development. The ideas of the Ukrainian pedagogues and scientists concerning the development of the Ukrainian education are presented in various collective or individual drafts of the independent Ukraine. They require further study.

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Реформирование общего среднего образования в Украине: концепции, проекты (1988-1991)

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Аннотация. В статье раскрыты причины создания, содержание концепций и проектов других нормативных документов по реформированию общего среднего образования в Украине в 1988-1991 гг. Аргументированно, что в исследуемый период развернулось широкомасштабное движение украинских педагогов относительно развития национального общего среднего образования в рамках формально действующей советской авторитарно-партійной системы. Полученное историко-педагогическое знание касательно очерченного феномена обогащает педагогическое источниковедение и имеет большое теоретическое значение для дальнейшего развития украинской школы.

Ключевые слова: реформирование общего среднего образования, концепции, проекты нормативных документов, украинская школа, педагогическое источниковедение, Украина.