

Totodată, vor reprezenta documente de politici educaționale, care vor reflecta concepția pedagogică și psihologică asupra educației și dezvoltării copilului (de la naștere la 7 ani) în Republica Moldova.

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THE PRESENT-DAY STAGE MODERNISATION OF THE CONTENT OF PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION: UKRAINIAN EXPERIENCE

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Abstract. *The article highlights the Ukrainian experience of modernizing the content of primary education starting from 2014. The author characterizes the new State Standard that is based on the provisions of the Law “On Education” (2017) and the Concept of the New Ukrainian School (2016). The competence-based approach applied in the State Standards becomes an instrumental one in establishing the connection*

between educational outcomes and the selection of relevant content, the use of various forms and methods of instruction, and ways of assessing the educational achievements of pupils. The author highlights an innovative algorithm for constructing a standard, i.e. from obligatory outcomes of primary education in the state standards to the expected outcomes in typical educational programs; content, forms, methods that are the means to achieve different types of educational outcomes. The author stresses the wide participation of all stakeholders (the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine, educators, parents, NGOs) during developing the State Standard.

During the years of independence of Ukraine, the content of school education has been continuously changing in accordance with new laws, concepts, conditions that reflect the national needs for the development of schooling and attempts to take into account foreign experience. Drafting new laws in the area of education, the definition of new methodological foundations for its development was carried out under conditions of political and economic instability, lack of forward-looking experiments, rapid pace of innovations, often without proper monitoring of their effectiveness.

Starting with the 90-s of the 20th century a final transition to the 4-year term of primary schooling was carried out. The Law of Ukraine “On Education” (2017) states that primary school is the first level of the National Qualification Framework; it should ensure that pupils develop general skills and competences, lay the foundation for their further learning and personal development. During this time, three generations of state standards have been developed, ideas of a competence-based approach are getting more and more theoretically substantiated and practically implemented.

The present-day stage of modernisation of content of primary school education (2014-2018) is characterised by the development of the State Standard of the Content of Primary Education on a new legislative, methodological, didactic and methods bases. Over the years, a large volume of new education development documents have been developed – the Law of Ukraine “On Education” [14, p. 1-4], the Concept “New Ukrainian School” (2016), the State Standard of General Secondary Education (2016), the State Standard of Primary Education (Zakon Ukrainy «Pro osvitu») [19], two typical educational programs for primary school [10, p. 1-6].

The development of the new State Standard was preceded by the improvement of the curricula of the working State Standard (2011) started with a broad public discussion (2015-2016) in the media. The purpose of the changes was to unload the instruction contents and requirements to the learning outcomes, improve the logical sequence of studying its separate sections, extracting secondary material etc. [7; 8].

The theoretical foundations for the development of a new content stated in the Rationale of Standards of the General Secondary Education (O.I. Lyashenko carried out scientific guidance on the part of the National Academy of Sciences (NAES) of Ukraine). Therefore, the development of the State Standard of Primary Education was the first step in the process of the development of General Secondary Education Standard. It was aimed at promoting the integrity and continuity of the modernisation of the content of education of the Ukrainian school on a universal methodological and theoretical basis, at application of the universal characteristics of key competencies.

The new State Standard for Primary Education was created as an innovative product with the participation of a wide range of stakeholders. A group of scholars the NAES of Ukraine took an active part in its development. The experience of foreign countries where reforms of the content of primary education on the basis of standardization and competence-based approach have taken/are taking place has been taken into account (Poland, Scotland, Northern Ireland etc.) [6, p. 17-181; 9; 18].

The principle of child-centeredness in all its dimensions and activity approach, which is the basis of the competence-based approach are defined as theoretical principles of constructing the content of primary education. It was necessary to take into account not only the actual needs of a modern child, but also lay the potential for his/her long-term development, readiness to continue education in the basic school. We believe that in the process of modernising the content (and further, in teaching methods), it is necessary to take into account not only aspects/issues that children are interested in, but also professionally and responsibly to ensure their further progress, which involves obtaining the required and expected educational outcomes, because real achievements can be used to assess the quality of changes in the primary education.

The greatest innovation in this stage of standardization of school content is the phenomenon of a new understanding of the outcomes of education. The content in the working State Standard was primary. Now the design of the content of primary education is fundamentally different. International and national experience has confirmed that the most productive is the approach, when instrumental knowledge being the basis for assimilation of ways of action is dominated during instruction. If educational outcomes become a benchmark in determining the content of primary education, then the competence-based approach, which was used in the previous State Standard, becomes a means to achieve another quality of education. Under these conditions, teachers must objectively distinguish between the process and the learning outcomes, and pupils gradually learn to distinguish knowledge about the facts, phenomena and knowledge about the means of action.

The normative bases here are provisions of the law "On Education" on educational outcomes. In particular:

- learning outcomes that are broader than competencies; they can be identified, planned, evaluated and measured; the person is able to demonstrate them after the completion of the educational program (Zakon Ukrainy «Pro Osvitu», 2017: art. 1, parg. 22);
- key competencies program (Zakon Ukrainy «Pro Osvitu», 2017: parg. 11, 15), which are recommended for all levels (fluency in the state language, ability to communicate by mother tongue (in case it differs from the state language) and foreign languages; mathematical competence, competence in the field of natural sciences, technology; innovation, environmental competence, informational –communication, civil and social competencies, cultural competence, lifelong learning, entrepreneurship and financial literacy;
- common for all competences skills: reading with understanding, ability to express one’s opinion orally and in writing; critical and systemic thinking; creativity, imitateness, ability to constructively manage emotions, ability to co-operate with other etc.

The introduction of a new terminology on educational outcomes and its further implementation in typical programs and textbooks reflects a change in the goals of education, which should gradually become productive. This led to the need to rethink the selection of content, ensuring its proximity to the children’s vital needs, harmonizing the complexity and volume of educational material with predictable outcomes.

In the State Standard, the requirements for the compulsory outcomes of primary education and competencies of pupils are determined by the following educational areas: linguistic and literary (Ukrainian language and literature, languages and literature of the national minorities, foreign language teaching and learning); mathematical; natural science; technological; ITC; social and health saving; civil and historical; artistic; physical education. Consequently, in comparison with the previous Standard, the new document presents a different set of educational areas: their number (9 areas) increased, some titles were changed.

According to the new State Standard, two typical educational programs are developed that meet its requirements, but present the expected outcomes, content and volume of the integrated courses differently [10, p. 1-6].

We will comment on the didactic potential of the Typical Educational Program developed by the scholars of the NAES of Ukraine [*ibidem*, p. 190-237]. It is based on the principles of child-centeredness and environmental compatibility; coordination of the objectives of the subject (course) with the expected outcomes and content; practical orientation of the expected outcomes; accessibility and scientific content; continuity and perspective content for the development of a child; interconnected formation of key and subject competencies in each educational area; opportunities to implement the content of education through subjects or integrated courses; possibilities to adapt the content of the program to the individual peculiarities of children (intellectual, physical, cognitive).

Taking into account the integrated nature of each competence, the program recommends systematic use of intrinsic and interpersonal relationships that promote the integrity of the outcomes of primary education and the transfer of skills in new situations, and is a prerequisite for the formation of basic (crosscutting) abilities.

In the process of developing a typical educational program the scholars have defined the following aspects of research: how to prevent the possibility of overloading in a new primary school; how to define the “core of content” for integrated courses, what number of educational areas and what is appropriate to integrate, how to predict in each of the areas the interconnection of key and subject competencies, because all competencies are important, but each educational area has its own priorities for their formation. The new document of the European Commission (Brussels) on the modernised European Reference Framework of Key Competencies for Lifelong Learning (January 2018) confirmed the effectiveness of the application of a competence-based approach in the education of different countries. It is determined that its correct implementation allows one to expect the development of critical thinking of young Europeans, the ability to solve problems, teamwork skills, communication and negotiation as well as analytical and creative abilities, and the perception of values between cultures (O. Lokshyna and others).

The analysis of the third generation of State Standard development process allows us to identify the following features: at this stage, the development of a new Law “On Education”, the methodology of reforming secondary education and the practical reflection of the requirements of these documents in State Standard projects and typical educational programs for primary school took place almost simultaneously. The rapid pace of work has resulted, from our point of view, in inadequate consistency with the basic Law “On Education” regarding the reflection of the whole range of key competencies and basic skills in the State Standard and typical educational programs. The implementation of a competence-based approach into the development of the State Standard, and then into the typical educational programs was carried out fundamentally in a new way: from the obligatory and expected outcomes to the definition of the content of the education they corresponded to. Therefore, this generation of the State Standard can be considered as a competency oriented one.

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