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CONTENT AND FORMS OF INFORMAL EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE TASKS OF CIVIC EDUCATION

Theory and practice of education includes formal and informal education (learning), which concurrently contribute to solving the problems of professional and social development of the youth.

Formal education is understood as a generally accepted traditional system that includes different levels of education from primary school to higher education and implements approved by the state programs designed for each level. Theory and practice of formal education have been carefully studied as they are constantly in the purview of pedagogy.

The idea of informal education is addressed in a number of regulations of international organizations, including the United Nations, European Union, and UNESCO. The Memorandum of the European Commission puts forward recommendations on the development of informal education, the main purpose of which is training and retraining of young people and adults as a means of their adaption to constant changes in the social environment [1].

The notion of informal education is relatively new; the European scientific community began active discussions in this matter at the end of the previous century, informal learning being viewed in the context of lifelong learning. This issue is discussed in the scientific writings of R. Dave, J. Cross, P. Davis, D. Livingstone, D. Field, P. Fordhem, H. Colley, P. Hodgkinson, J. Malcolm et al. Scholars H. Colley,

P. Hodkinson, and J. Malcolm have found a number of significant differences, definitions that distinguish formal and informal education [2, p. 81 – 86]. D. Livingston developed a scheme of self-directed and collective informal cognitive process and identified different types of learning processes related to formal and informal learning [3].

A significant contribution to the development of theory and technology of adult education has been made by Russian scientists, such as S. Batyshev, S. Vershlovsky, Yu. Kolyutkyn, A. Mitina, O. Leontieva, and N. Lobanov. In Ukraine, the investigation of the problems has been done by S. Boltivets, Yu. Derkach, S. Kovalenko, N. Nychkalo, O. Ohienko, V. Radkevich, S. Sysoeva, V. Skulska, N. Fedorova. In our opinion, the research by S. Zakrevs'ka is important, as she systematized the models of teaching and cognitive processes in the system of formal and informal learning [4, p. 126 – 138]. Significant contribution to the development of comparative pedagogy has been made by V. Davydova, who studied the informal learning of adults in educational clubs in Sweden. She has made a holistic scientific analysis of the phenomenon of informal adult education in one of the most economically developed countries with an effective system of social protection and a high level of education and has developed recommendations on how to use best Swedish practices in Ukraine [5, p. 28 – 37].

However, it should be noted that a comprehensive study of informal adult learning as an integral component of lifelong education in Ukraine has not been conducted yet.

In the process of the creation and consolidation of a sovereign, democratic, law-bound state, the urgency of introducing informal learning into the Ukrainian society is growing due to its significant potential in the civic education of the younger generation. Therefore, in our opinion, the study of informal learning, which includes adult education and retraining of teachers, as well as its active introduction into the practice of a university, deserves attention and may enrich the national educational thought with new ideas and experience.

The purpose of this article is to reveal and prove the role of informal education in improving professional skills of teachers in the area of civic education of students and to demonstrate the potential of trainings as one of the most effective types of informal learning in increasing the leadership capacity of teachers.

The formation of civil society in Ukraine involves significant changes in the approaches to the educational process in the modern school, on the one hand, and to the professional preparation of teachers, on the other. These changes are to ensure the development and formation of the citizen, i.e. personality, that organically combines high moral virtue, civic maturity, patriotism, professional competence, activity, creativity, the need for self-improvement, developed sense of duty and responsibility to society, homeland, etc.

Civic education is the education directed on the formation of knowledge about rights and responsibilities of the individual, it is closely associated with the formation of social and political competence of the individual in the public sphere. The Academy of Pedagogical Sciences has developed the Concept of civic education of the individual in the context of the development of the Ukrainian statehood, which identified the main goals on the way to the formation of conscientious citizen-patriot, such as: ensuring human rights in real life, formation of the social activity of an individual on the basis of his/her social skills, willingness to participate in the institutional development of the state, ability to cohabitate and cooperate in civil society, willingness to take responsibility, formation of diligence, responsibility for one's actions, respect for the Constitution of Ukraine, laws, state language, ability to communicate with democratic institutions, governments, protect and maintain laws and human rights, be familiar with the ways of social protection, etc. [6].

It should be noted that the study of foreign languages in school significantly contributes to the implementation of the aforementioned tasks. Creative potential of the language in civic education is extraordinary. Foreign language teachers can give new content in terms of civic education to all topics on the curriculum, as well as influence the development of students' civic skills through teaching methods and

means. [7, p. 164]. However, this potential is not fully realized for several reasons. One of the main reasons, in our opinion, is the lack of the preparedness of teachers to promote civic education among their students. Experience shows that foreign language teachers, particularly teachers in rural schools, have low level of theoretical knowledge in language training and lack practical skills of using means and methods of civic education of students in the process of learning a foreign language.

Having analyzed the problem in the northern part of Luhansk region, Starobils'k Campus of Luhansk Taras Shevchenko National University has submitted a request and won an international grant from the U.S. Peace Corps in Ukraine for the organization and implementation of the project *Empowering Teachers in the Community through Leadership Training and Civic Education*.

The goal of the project is to improve the knowledge base in civic education of the English language teachers of rural schools from Starobils'k and four neighboring districts of Luhansk region and enhance their leadership potential in their schools and communities. To achieve the goal, the following objectives were outlined:

- to organize an innovative training in the development of democracy for the English language teachers working in rural schools of Bilovods'k, Milove, Novoaidar, Novopskov, and Starobils'k districts of Luhansk region;
- to organize an innovative training in civic education for students-leaders;
- to teach participants the fundamentals of democracy and to develop their skills in searching for information on the Internet;
- to tell the teachers about civic education and new methods of civic education of students by means of foreign language instruction.

The project is based on the training as one of the types of informal learning, because it is an effective form of acquiring knowledge and an important tool for the formation of skills in the process of live communication. During the training, an informal, intimate communication is created, which gives the group a variety of

options for solution of problems.

The choice of the training as a form of educational activity is determined by the fact that it is simultaneously:

- an effective way of acquiring knowledge;
- an effective instrument for skills development;
- an interesting process of learning about oneself and others; and
- a form of expanding experience.

Training and traditional forms of teaching/learning have significant differences. Traditional education is a form of passing information from those who teach, to those who learn. Instead, the training is primarily focused on the question and search answers in practice. Unlike traditional learning, training covers the entire potential of a person: the level and scope of his/her competence (social, emotional, and intellectual), independence, ability to make decisions, to interact, etc. [8].

In the course of organizing and conducting the training, the Project Committee considered and took into account the recommendations of the European Commission on the organization of informal learning in terms of creating favorable conditions to ensure better learning outcomes, namely:

- English language teachers of remote rural schools from Starobils'k and four neighboring districts of Luhansk region were invited to participate in the training;
- a flexible schedule, convenient for teachers, was suggested;
- the training was free from charge;
- necessary equipment was purchased: a laptop, projector, and screen to show presentations, and each participant received a package of support materials, notebook, pen, disks, paper, etc.; and
- a coffee break was organized.

At the preparatory stage, a group of students of the English Philology Department was chosen, and three creative teams were set up. Three Peace Corps

volunteers, working in schools and communities in Luhansk region, were invited. They conducted training for students on human rights, civil society organizations and social volunteer work in the community. Students, volunteers, and teachers developed three presentations on these topics and a package of support materials both in electronic and in printed formats.

A four-day training program for teachers was planned so that each session is devoted to one topic and consists of two parts. The first part is theoretical, where participants discuss the issues raised in the presentation and offer solutions to address them. During the second, practical, part of the training, the participants (teachers, students, and coaches) do a joint project, create a presentation on a certain aspect of civic education. Successful presentation requires prior preparation, coherent organization and demonstration. Work on the projects is carried out in several stages:

- setting up creative groups, which include teachers, students, and a coach;
- choosing a topic and defining final outcomes;
- search for information on the Internet and its further processing;
- project planning and distribution of responsibilities among team members;
- presentation; and
- discussion, evaluation of the presentation.

The advantages of group work are that information and knowledge are accessible to all group members. In addition, it is possible to give instructions to all participants at once. It is also important that some members, who cannot immediately take an active part in learning and, therefore, feel that their learning potential is limited, find it easier to adapt to the conditions of training in a large group. Unlike large group experience, where people, for the most part, are passive recipients of information, training in small groups allows for the interaction of the participants, where they can develop their own ideas and show their creativity in other forms.

Communication of the participants during trainings includes two components: content and process. The content of the course is a subject that is studied. Therefore,

one of the key indicators of the effectiveness of the training is the selection of topics for discussion. They must be explicit and consistent with the purpose. To achieve the objectives of our training, the following themes were selected: “Human Rights”, “Duties of the Citizen of Ukraine”, “Creation and Management of Social Projects”. The process of the training is the interaction of the trainees during the training, the atmosphere created, the way the participants influence each other. In order to ensure favorable working atmosphere during the work in the training group, it is necessary to define the rules to be observed by each participant. The main ones are: appreciation of time, politeness, positivity, speaking for yourself, voluntary activity, privacy, feedback, and others. Rules are adopted at the beginning of the training and are necessary to ensure that everyone can work in comfortable conditions, get information oneself and does not interfere with others getting information in a convenient for them way, can freely express his/her opinions.

When discussing the topics, the trainees are involved in various learning activities. Thus, to study the topic “Human Rights”, the following activities can be suggested: to find the most accurate explanation of the term “right” in the explanatory dictionary of the English language, to comment on the statements of famous personalities: Indira Gandhi, Franklin Roosevelt, Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King on human rights, to analyze the second part of the Constitution Ukraine that states the rights of the citizens of Ukraine, to listen to the Peace Corps volunteers who speak about the U.S. Constitution, to compare the two documents, and others. In the practical part of the session, the groups are offered to begin work on their presentation on one of the following topics: “Know your Rights”, “Youth Rights”, “Is the Rule of Law Myth or Reality?” Then, the coaches teach the trainees different ways of finding information on the Internet, creating publications and presentations.

While working on the theme “The Responsibilities of the Citizen of Ukraine”, it is expedient to use such forms of work as “brainstorming.” This training method can be used in the entire group of participants and in small groups. “Brainstorming” is conducted in two stages: during the first phase ideas are generated, during the second

part the ideas are assessed. On the blackboard, a picture of an ideal citizen is posted, and the participants write down the ideas about the characteristics of an ideal citizen on separate worksheets. Then, the worksheets are being displayed on the blackboard. It stimulates thinking and is useful for the selection of the best ideas in the course of evaluation at the second stage. Having made a collective portrait, trainees compare it with the one suggested by the American volunteer and discuss cultural differences. In the second part of the session, the work in groups to create PowerPoint presentations on selected topics in the computer lab is continued. The trainers provide the teachers with technical and methodological assistance.

When working on the topic “Creating and Managing a Social Project”, it is effective to use a role-playing game that enables to:

- gain experience with certain skills in game situations;
- examine alternative ways of action, ideas proposed for the game;
- gain confidence in their abilities during practical activities or reproduction of a certain event;
- consolidate the material by providing feedback; and
- add fun to the learning process.

Role-playing, like many other games and training exercises, includes interactive teaching methods. Interactive learning involves the use of different types of activities: physical (motor activity), social (activity in the social setting, communication, interaction) according to the topics of training [8]. According to the rules, the participants act as residents of small towns of the United States of America, analyze ecological and social problems in their communities, then, with trainers, plan and implement social projects. The first group organizes cleaning the banks of the river campaign, the other one is creating a children's volunteer team to help the elderly people in the area, and the third team organizes asylum for homeless animals.

An important component of any training is the assessment of its results, which can be conducted with the help of a questionnaire and collective discussion. This

makes it possible to analyze the work of all participants of the training, identify and evaluate the progress, identify positives and shortcomings.

Thus, informal education is an important constituent in the creation of a democratic society, bringing up its citizens. Its importance for democratization is also explained by the fact that its flexibility allows educational institutions to achieve a variety of educational objectives, to solve the problems of professional and moral development of young people. Informal learning has great potential in enhancing the professionalism of teachers in civic education. It involves a variety of forms and methods. One of the most effective types of informal learning for the realization of this potential is the training, as a specific method of obtaining knowledge and skills in the process of interaction in the group and led by the coach.

The experience of conducting the training on civic education for teachers of English in rural schools from Starobilsk and four neighboring districts of Luhansk region attests to the need for its active implementation into practice. Conducting trainings for teachers on various aspects of education has to become an integral part of training teachers to implement ideas of lifelong learning, which is of interest for further research.

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Вихватенко М. Т., Догадайло Н. І. Зміст і форми неформальної освіти з огляду на завдання громадянського виховання

У статті висвітлено особливості неформальної освіти в контексті безперервного навчання, проаналізовано можливості неформальної освіти як засобу підготовки вчителів до громадянського виховання молодого покоління; обґрунтовано вибір тренінгу як виду неформального навчання, розглянуто методіку організації та проведення тренінгових занять; узагальнено досвід проведення тренінгу з громадянської освіти для вчителів англійської мови північного регіону Луганської області на Старобільському факультеті ЛНУ імені Тараса Шевченка.

Ключові слова: неформальна освіта, громадянська освіта, громадянське виховання, тренінг, соціальний проект, презентація, рольова гра, інтерактивні форми навчання.

Выхватенко Н. Т., Догадайло Н. И. Содержание и формы неформального образования с учётом задач гражданского воспитания

В статье раскрываются особенности неформального образования в контексте непрерывного обучения, анализируются возможности неформального образования как средства подготовки учителей к гражданскому воспитанию подрастающего поколения, обосновывается выбор тренинга как вида неформального образования; рассматривается методика организации и проведения тренинга и обобщен опыт проведения тренинга по гражданскому образованию для учителей английского языка северного региона Луганской области на Старобельском факультете ЛНУ имени Тараса Шевченко.

Ключевые слова: неформальное образование, гражданское образование, гражданское воспитание, тренинг, социальный проект, презентация, ролевая игра, интерактивные формы обучения.

Vykhvatenko M. T., Dohadailo N. I. Content and Forms of Informal Education in the Context of the Tasks of Civic Education

The article outlines the peculiarities of informal education in the context of lifelong learning; considers the possibilities of informal education as a means of teachers' preparation for civic education of children; proves the selection of trainings as a type of informal learning; and summarizes the practice of providing an innovative training program on civic education for the teachers of English conducted in the northern part of Luhansk region at Starobils'k Campus of Luhansk Taras Shevchenko National University.

Key words: informal education, civic education, civic upbringing, training, social project, presentation, role-play, interactive forms of learning.

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