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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS' EDUCATION AT BRITISH AND AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES

ABSTRACT

The paper studies progressive experience of foreign language teachers' education at leading universities of Great Britain (the University of Sheffield, London, Lancaster, Cambridge, Southampton, and Newcastle Universities) and the USA (the University of Illinois, New York University, Princeton and Yale Universities). It is defined that to get a qualification of a foreign language teacher in both countries one must obtain a degree in foreign language education or language teaching that can be provided by different programs in either Teaching/Education or Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching/Second Language Acquisition (the title can somewhat differ depending on the university). It is found out that in the UK and US universities the latter focus on different aspects of language study such as morphology, syntax, semantics, psycholinguistics, and translation; bilingual education; and teaching foreign languages.

Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers in both countries are analyzed. Curricula, syllabi, compulsory and elective subjects, implementation of teaching practice and scientific research for foreign language teaching (FLT) are characterized.

Comparative analysis of British and American education programs aimed at FLT is carried out. Similar features include combination of professional subjects (majors) and theoretical ones; development of skills to deliver lessons, develop lesson plans, and syllabi; provision of students' exchange programs; wide use of multimedia technologies; adaptation to individual requirements and needs of students; prevalence of individual work of students in curriculum workload; interdisciplinary character of education; differentiation and focus on realization of students' professional goals; flexibility and diversity of educational process; and inclusion of extra-curricular activities into the content of study. Different is the essence of education programs for FLT – in the USA they are more practice-oriented, whereas in GB students gradually switch from theory to practice. British curricula for FLT are more focused on language disciplines, whereas American ones are more concentrated on the development of sociocultural competence of students.

Keywords: *foreign language teacher, education program, degree in Foreign Language Education, Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching, Great Britain, the USA, university, FLT.*

АНОТАЦІЯ

У статті досліджено передовий досвід підготовки вчителів іноземних мов у провідних університетах Великої Британії та США. З'ясовано, що для отримання кваліфікації вчителя іноземної мови в обох країнах необхідно здобути ступінь бакалавра або магістра з іноземної освіти або викладання іноземної мови, який забезпечується освітніми програмами у галузі «Викладання/Освіта» або «Прикладна



лінгвістика для викладання мови» (точне формулювання програми може відрізнятися залежно від закладу).

Охарактеризовано стандарти підготовки вчителів іноземних мов в обох країнах, проаналізовано навчальні програми, плани, обов'язкові та вибіркові предмети, особливості педагогічної практики та наукових досліджень для майбутніх вчителів іноземних мов.

Проведено порівняльний аналіз британських та американських освітніх програм підготовки вчителів іноземної мови. Виокремлено такі їхні подібні ознаки: поєднання професійних навчальних предметів і загальних теоретичних; спрямованість на розвиток методичних навичок, вміння складати плани-конспекти уроків; організація програм обміну студентами; тісна співпраця студентів і викладачів; широке використання мультимедійних технологій; адаптація до індивідуальних вимог і потреб студентів; переважання індивідуальної роботи студентів у навчальному навантаженні; міждисциплінарний характер навчання; диференціація та спрямованість на реалізацію професійних цілей студентів; гнучкість і різноманітність навчальних програм; включення до змісту навчання позакласних форм роботи. Деяко відмінною для обох країн є специфіка побудови освітніх програм підготовки вчителів іноземних мов – у США вони більш практико-орієнтовані, тоді як у Великій Британії студенти поступово переходять від теорії до практики. Британські освітні програми більше зосереджені на мовних дисциплінах, тоді як американські – на соціокультурних аспектах використання мови та формуванні соціокультурної компетентності студентів.

Ключові слова: вчитель іноземної мови, освітня програма, ступінь бакалавра/магістра у галузі іноземної освіти або викладання іноземної мови, прикладна лінгвістика для викладання мови, США, Велика Британія, університет, викладання іноземної мови.

INTRODUCTION

Modern globalization and internationalization processes require competent and professional teachers of foreign languages, especially English, to provide qualitative education of future generations, who are able to reinforce international relations and exercise good command of foreign languages in different branches of social and professional life. This makes it necessary to study experience of leading universities providing qualitative professional training of foreign language teachers. Considering the prestige and reputation of British and American higher educational institutions, we regard it essential to analyze the experience of these two countries.

THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The paper is aimed at studying progressive experience of foreign language teachers' training at leading universities of Great Britain and the USA in order to outline ideas, tendencies and trends that can be productive in educational system of Ukraine.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODS

The issue of foreign language teachers' education has been of substantial interest to many scientists and pedagogues all over the world. Special attention should be paid to works of B. Avalos (2014), J. DeMonte (2013), K. Johnson (2006), A. Lieberman and L. Miller (2014) related to second language teacher education. F. Korthagen (2017) studied ESL teachers' learning and professional development. M. Snow (2005) dedicated his research to TESOL MA teacher education, and F. Troyan (2012) analyzed standards for



foreign language learning and teachers' preparation. In terms of our research, we studied not only the works of the mentioned researchers but also analyzed practical experience of leading universities in GB (the University of Sheffield, London, Lancaster, Cambridge, Southampton, and Newcastle Universities) and the USA (University of Illinois, New York University, Princeton and Yale Universities) which provide education programs for FLT.

In the course of our research, we applied a range of general scientific methods such as study, analysis and synthesis of scientific, educational, and informational online resources, as well as systematization and generalization. The research is qualitative (descriptive and comparative) and includes observation and narrative inquiry.

RESULTS

Pedagogical education system in the UK and the USA has already solved many problems, which are still urgent for Ukraine – differentiation and individualization of teachers' education at universities, use of modern technologies, and implementation of alternative programs of pedagogical training. They also actively use modern forms, methods and means of learning. Education programs for FLT in these countries provide training of professionals who are knowledgeable in linguistic aspects of the foreign language as well as its teaching.

We have studied education programs for FLT at the universities of the USA (University of Illinois, New York University, Princeton and Yale Universities). The titles of the programs can somewhat differ depending on the university (MA in TESOL, MA in English Language Teaching, MA in Foreign and Second Language Education, MA in Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition, etc.). The latter is of special interest for Ukraine as home education programs in Applied Linguistics don't provide the qualification of a foreign language teacher. In the USA, these programs presuppose bilingual education, linguistics study and methods of teaching foreign languages. They also provide school teaching practice for students. Programs are diverse and take into account students' preferences. They can be concentrated on one definite language or a group of languages, require studying historical aspects of languages, foreign language teaching methods and connection of languages with cognitive science. They also focus on different aspects of language study such as morphology, syntax, semantics, psycholinguistics, translation and teaching.

Although different education programs in Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition are based on different approaches, they have similar requirements. All the students must master "Introduction to Language Studies" and about five theoretical language disciplines. They must study one or two foreign languages and choose courses in related subjects to improve linguistic knowledge. Scientific research and international exchange programs are also essential. Students majoring in Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition acquire valuable intellectual skills, such as analytical thinking, critical analysis, argumentation and presenting one's point of view. Besides, teaching is an important part of the linguistic education. Students get enough knowledge, skills and abilities to develop teaching materials, apply effective methods of teaching foreign languages and carry out scientific research in education. All academic subjects are concentrated on the development of communicative competence of future professionals.

Curricula, syllabi and competences for Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition programs are elaborated based on Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers elaborated by American Council on Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL) (Table 1):



Table 1

Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers (by ACTFL)

| | |
|--|--|
| STANDARD 1: Language proficiency: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational | Students in FLT preparation programs demonstrate a high level of proficiency in the foreign languages they will teach. They are able to communicate effectively in interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational contexts. They can present information, concepts, and ideas to learners with language proficiency characteristic of a minimum level of "Advanced Low" or "Intermediate High" according to the target language |
| STANDARD 2: Cultures, linguistics, literatures, and concepts from other disciplines | Students in FLT preparation programs demonstrate understanding of the multiple content areas that comprise the field of foreign language studies. They know linguistic features of the foreign language system and recognize the changing nature of language. They identify distinctive viewpoints in the literary texts, films, art works, and documents from a range of disciplines accessible to them only through the foreign language |
| STANDARD 3: Language acquisition theories and knowledge of students and their needs | Students in FLT preparation programs demonstrate an understanding of the principles of language acquisition and use this knowledge to create linguistically and culturally rich learning environments. They demonstrate an understanding of child and adolescent development, the context of instruction, and their students' backgrounds, skills, and learning profiles in order to create a supportive learning environment that meets individual students' needs |
| STANDARD 4: Integration of standards in planning and instruction | Students in FLT preparation programs understand and use the national Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21 st Century (2006) or their recently refreshed version World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (2015) and their state standards to make instructional decisions. They demonstrate an understanding of the standards and integrate them into their curricular planning. They design instructional practices and classroom experiences that adhere to these standards. They use the standards to select and integrate authentic materials and technology, as well as to adapt and create materials, to support communication in their classrooms |
| STANDARD 5: Assessment of languages and cultures – impact on student learning | Students in FLT preparation programs use a variety of assessment models to demonstrate students' ability to communicate in the instructed language in interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational modes; they show understanding of cultural and literary products, practices, and perspectives of the foreign language. They reflect on results of assessments and adjust instruction accordingly |
| STANDARD 6: Professional development, advocacy, and ethics | Students in FLT engage in ongoing professional development opportunities that strengthen their own linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical competence and promote reflection on practice. They prepare students to interact successfully in the global community of the 21 st century. They understand the importance of collaboration to advocate for the learning of languages and cultures. They understand responsibilities of being a professional language teacher and are committed to ethical interactions with all stakeholders |

Source: American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) (2013).



Due to the analysis of these standards, we can make up a conclusion that future foreign language teachers who graduate from American universities are to have:

- profound professional skills (both theoretical and practical);
- intention to develop professionally and personally;
- skills to work with modern information technologies;
- abilities to use the language in real life situations and professional field, etc.

(Avalos, 2011).

The development of the personality of a future foreign language teacher in the course of their education presupposes combination of two pedagogical processes: developing students' professional socialization and providing them with opportunities of professional development. It is achieved by means of increasing the number of extra-curricular activities.

Training of future foreign language teachers within education programs aimed at FLT has its specifics and is concentrated on individual peculiarities of each student. High volume of individual work, scientific research, distant learning and sometimes no control by the teachers make such kind of training effective. Education programs in Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition are varied, have flexible syllabi, and applied character of the disciplines. Their peculiar feature is interdisciplinary approach to building the content of education. Disciplines are both compulsory and elective. For example, university of New York offers such compulsory disciplines as "Language Introduction", "Phonology", "Morphemes and Word Formation", "Semantics of the Language", "Informational Technologies in Linguistics", "Historical Linguistics" etc. Theoretical subjects are always compulsory (e.g. Language Studies, Theoretical Phonetics, Theoretical Grammar, Stylistics, Lexicology, History of Language etc.). Among elective courses are "Interaction of Languages and Cultures", "Methods of Foreign Language Teaching", "Ethnic and National Peculiarities of the Language", "Basics of Artificial Intelligence" etc. (DeMonte, 2013).

An interesting aspect is that American universities sometimes divide a discipline into several sub disciplines, which are studied during several years. For instance, in Yale University the subject "Essentials of Linguistics" is compulsory and is divided into separate disciplines – Phonetics, Phonology, Lexicology and Stylistics.

American system of education presupposes that future teachers have right to teach English as a second language (ESL) only after obtaining a degree for foreign language teaching and TESOL certificate.

Apart from degree in higher education, one can get the specialization of a foreign language teacher by means of completing different courses developed by relevant faculties and institutes of American universities. The number and popularity of online courses is increasing. They offer all the necessary video and text files. After completion of a module learners undergo testing, results of which allow them to move to another module and final testing. Learners communicate online, develop lesson plans based on the acquired knowledge and analyze works of other learners. The most popular programs in the USA are Teaching Certificate Program and English for Teaching, which are classroom-based but provide some online practice with the use of computer technologies. Their duration is from one to eight weeks (Korthagen, 2017; Snow, 2005).

In order to teach a foreign language in Great Britain one has to obtain a degree in either Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching, Teaching Foreign Languages, or Education (the titles of the programs may vary depending on the university). The latter



typically covers academic concepts in teaching, communication and learning theories as well as courses in management, humanities, sciences and data analytics, all in aid of teaching. A degree in Education helps to prepare for employment in schools and universities as a teacher, administrator, headmaster, and other fulfilling occupations.

A degree in Teaching Foreign Languages aims to develop confident and well-informed language teaching practitioners who are capable of designing and teaching comprehensive language programs.

Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching programs train professionals in language studies, who are capable of fulfilling their professional activities in different branches of human activity, including FLT. Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching is designed to engage students in a wide range of topics and perspectives relevant to the field of linguistics, professional translation, IT industry, education and language policy, language teaching, and publishing, all of which build professional skills alongside theoretical understanding.

We have analyzed education programs and curricula in Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching at the University of Sheffield, London, Lancaster, Cambridge, Southampton, and Newcastle Universities. During the first year of study students master basic analytical means and concepts of languages. “Structure of the English Language” is a compulsory component of any Applied Linguistics program. Students are acquainted with different linguistic researches, methods of cognition, automated, audio-visual learning of language, corpora, etc. Another compulsory subject is “Essentials of Linguistics” that includes Phonetics, Phonology, Lexicology and Stylistics (Lancaster University, 2022). The first year of studying presupposes mastering basic concepts of linguistics and language structure as well as 2–3 elective subjects (e.g. Court Linguistics, Language Origins etc.). (Johnson, 2006).

During the second year of studying students choose branches of knowledge that they are interested in and create their own program of studying. For example, the University of Sheffield offers such branches as “Phonetics and Syntax”, “History of Language”, “Language and Society”, “English Language Teaching”. During the third year students improve their knowledge in the chosen branch and supplement it with other subjects. At the same time, some universities, for example Southampton University, offer students the opportunity to study abroad during the third year and it is considered as a part of their study program. During the last year students work on their own scientific project that is essential for the final accreditation (Lancaster University, 2022).

Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching education programs in British universities provide academic subjects aimed at both language studies and teaching. Having studied curricula at the universities of Sheffield, London, Lancaster, and Cambridge we defined the following disciplines studied in the majority of Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching programs:

Year 1: Old English; Sounds and Syntax; Varieties of English; Nature of language; Language, Brain and Society.

Year 2: Phonological and Syntactical Theory; Language Acquisition; Sociolinguistics and Sociology of Language; Discourse Analysis; Language and Pedagogical Practice; Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

Year 3: History of Linguistics; Cognitive Linguistics; Phonetics and Phonological Theory; Psycholinguistics; Corpus-based English Language Studies (Cambridge College, 2021).



All the subjects studied in British and American universities within the education programs of Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching (Second Language Acquisition) can be roughly divided into professional, linguistic and language practice (Table 2).

Table 2

Classification of academic subjects studied within Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching (Second Language Acquisition) programs in GB and the USA

| the UK | the USA |
|---|--|
| Professional teaching disciplines | |
| Sociolinguistics and Foreign Language Studies Individual and Group Differences in Foreign Language Study Methods of Teaching Lexis, Grammar, Listening and Reading Modern Trends in Language Education | Basic Methods of Teaching Foreign Language Teaching Oral Language Teaching Grammar Lesson Planning and Syllabi Methods of Teaching Lexis, Phonetics, Speaking |
| Linguistic Disciplines | |
| Theory of Language Ancient Languages and Cultures Language and Culture of Anglo-Saxon Period Linguistic Semantics | Linguistics as a Cognitive Science Methods of Field Studies in Linguistics Languages of Minorities of the USA Disappearing Languages Etymology Modern Problems in Linguistics |
| Language Practice Disciplines | |
| Academic Reading and Writing Electronic Resources in Virtual Education Analysis in Language Study Oral and Written Language Foreign Methods of Scientific Research | English Language Practice of Intercultural Communication Practice of Second Foreign Language Country Studies Scientific Research Work |

Source: Cambridge College (2021); Lancaster University (2022); Snow (2005).

It is clear that professional majoring disciplines are introduced during the second year of study. The disciplines are organized in such a way that first students get theoretical knowledge and then put them into practice. They develop their abilities to analyze different situations, develop teaching materials and lesson plans, use current teaching methods, resources, trends and acquire information about peculiarities of foreign language study. Students demonstrate understanding of the importance of major linguistic disciplines, role of the foreign language, of the teacher, principles of curricula development, communicative method of teaching a language.

Ministry of Education of the UK presents definite requirements to teachers of foreign languages based on Qualified Teachers Standards (2014) (Trojan, 2012). They outline necessary knowledge, abilities, skills, and requirements to teachers' personal and professional development (Table 3).

Teaching practice occupies a substantial part of FLT training in British and American universities. During the academic years and holidays, students give lessons in schools and their universities, attend classes of their teachers to get more experience, develop lesson plans and have opportunity to go to another country for exchange programs.



According to the curriculum of the University of Illinois, students must undergo monthly teaching practice attending lessons of their teachers and other students.

Table 3

**Requirements to teachers of foreign languages according
to Qualified Teachers Standards (2014)**

| Part One: Teaching | Part Two: Personal and professional conduct |
|---|---|
| <p>A teacher must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge students. 2. Promote good progress and outcomes of students 3. Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge. 4. Plan and teach well-structured lessons. 5. Adapt teaching to the strengths and needs of all students. 6. Exercise accurate and productive assessment. 7. Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment. 8. Fulfil wider professional responsibilities | <p>Teachers possess public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •treating students with dignity, building relationships with mutual respect, and observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position; •having regard for the need to safeguard students' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions; •showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others; •not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; •ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit students' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law. •teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality. •teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities |

Source: Department for Education, 2021.

Besides, scientific research is an essential part of foreign language teachers' education. For instance, the Universities of Cambridge and Yale involve students annually in scientific research in the majoring subject "Pedagogy" and each semester students choose a new discipline for carrying out research (Lieberman & Miller, 2014).

In GB, foreign language teachers must not only acquire a degree in Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching, Teaching Foreign Languages, or Education but also constantly improve professional competence by means of different courses and programs elaborated and organized by universities, colleges and educational centers. The most popular is CELTA – Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language, which is worldwide famous. Courses in Great Britain are various in duration – from 2 weeks to several months and are based on implementing traditional and innovative methods of teaching, practicing essentials of pedagogies, studying all aspects of language teaching and developing necessary professional qualities.

On universities' websites, there is a list of jobs, for which students can apply after graduation. For instance, London University defines four branches of employment for students with a degree in Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching:



1. Education – they can get a teaching or administrative job in schools, language courses and centers, develop syllabi and teaching materials and be mentors for other teachers.

2. Teaching ESL – is possible only if they have TESOL certificate.

3. Translating/Interpreting.

4. Journalism – linguists' language skills, attention to details and analytical abilities make them competitive candidates in journalism.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

In general, having studied the system of foreign language teachers' education at a number of universities of GB and the USA we can define the following peculiarities of education programs for FLT:

- education of foreign language teachers is provided by education programs in either Teaching/Education or Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching/Second Language Acquisition (the titles of the programs may vary depending on the university);

- academic disciplines in Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching/Second Language Acquisition are aimed not only at professional subjects (majors) but theoretical aspects of language, acquisition of sociocultural and country studies knowledge, development of future teachers' skills to deliver lessons, develop lesson plans, syllabi;

- deep penetration of students into the traditions, culture and everyday life of target countries, which is fulfilled by means of foreign exchange programs;

- profound cooperation of students and teachers which gives rise to new approaches to educational process organization;

- wide use of multimedia technologies.

FLT programs in the universities of both countries adapt to individual requirements and needs of students and flexibly react to sociocultural changes of environment providing better adaptation of students to conditions of fast-paced life and labor market. That is why the curricula of British and American universities contain many subjects that encourage the formation of sociocultural competence in students. The most part of curriculum workload in the UK and the USA is in the form of individual work of students.

The difference in FLT curricula at British and American universities is that the former focus more on disciplines related to History of Language, its development and language skills ("Discourse Analysis", "Structure of English", "Knowledge and Mind" etc.), whereas the latter concentrate more not on the language itself but on knowledge of the target cultures and traditions ("Intercultural Communication", "Modern World of Language" etc.). Academic subjects in education programs for FLT in the USA are more practice-oriented, whereas in GB students thoroughly study theory and only after this apply it to practice.

Peculiar feature of both countries is interdisciplinary character of the content of education, differentiation and focus on realization of students' professional goals, flexibility and variety of educational programs, inclusion of extra-curricular activities into the content of study.

The prospect of further research is the study of organizing and implementing teaching practice for future foreign language teachers within education programs "Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching" and "Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition" to outline progressive experience that can be adjusted to correspond programs of Ukrainian universities.



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