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Faculty of Philology  
English & German Philology Department

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The current proceedings incorporate the research results presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> International Spring Symposium held at Alecu Russo Bălți State University. The contributions focus on current issues concerning language development and innovative language teaching practice.

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2. Analysing the functions of discourse (on the example of slogans and hashtags)
3. Proper English: Language, Culture and Curriculum
4. Principal concerns and preoccupation in language teaching
5. Analysis of the main cohesive devices in discourse
6. Determining how coherence is realized in discourse
7. Determining the factors affective human interaction
8. Analysis of conversations

## **THE INNOVATIVE FEATURES OF THE NEW PRE-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING CURRICULUM IN UKRAINE**

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**Abstract:** The article gives a detailed description of the innovative features of the joint project of the British Council Ukraine and the Ministry of Education and Science Ukraine which is called “New Generation School Teacher”. The project appeared as a response to recent changes and developments in education and society. The author acquaints the readers with the definition of the terms “innovation” and “pedagogical innovation”, provides a rationale for the importance of the changes in the system of teacher training in Ukraine. The article presents the results of the Baseline study. The author highlights that innovative Methodology Curriculum intends to provide students with important professional skills related to methodology, it also gives scope for developing essential life skills. A list of these skills is also given in the article (communication skills, time management skills, information literacy skills, etc.). Moreover, the article provides essential information on the innovations, which characterize the Methodology curriculum. The attention is also drawn to the fact that in this innovative Curriculum the topics of the traditional Methodology course are revised and substantially updated. The content of the discipline is complemented with innovative topics that must be taken into account in the process of learning English. All units of the Curriculum can be split into 2 main groups: Reconceptualized and New ones. There is also a detailed description of School Experience, which is an essential part of the Methodology course, because School Experience is aimed at linking methodology classes to teaching at school.

**Key words:** future teacher, innovation, pre-service teacher training, English, Methodology Curriculum, Methodology course, School experience, modules.

Nowadays the system of pre-service teacher training of Ukraine is characterized by numerous changes, taking place both in the sphere of primary, secondary and higher education. Moreover, thanks to Ukraine's move towards Europe and the wider world there appears the need for higher standards of English among the country's citizens. It is out of the question that English is considered a life skill and it is needed in all the spheres of everyday life of people: trade, travel, education and international relations. We are sure that any improvement would become possible only on condition that the standards of English teaching are raised at every level of the education system.

It should be said that a lot of Ukrainian and foreign scholars research the issues of future teachers' methodological training, but quite few of them pay attention to the innovative trends: the impact of a dialogue of cultures and civilizations on language learning and teaching (V. Safonova), the integration of information technology into the teacher education curriculum (N. Wentworth, R. Earle, M. Connell), innovative use of technologies in teaching languages (G. Dudeney, N. Hockly), reconceptualisation of language teacher education for the 21st century (Rod Bolitho). Despite all mentioned above, the issue of the reformation of the system of methodological training in Pre-Service language teacher education in Ukraine has not been fully covered yet.

Along with Ukraine's integration into the European educational space the pre-existing traditions in language teaching are no more relevant. English should not be taught and examined simply as a school subject, with an emphasis on knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. There is a need to see the language as a means of active communication or as a life skill. So, in March, 2013 British Council Ukraine and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine launched the joint project which is called "New Generation School Teacher".

The project team identified the urgent need to review the thematic modules of the Curriculum and bring them into a line with the challenges of the day, with a particular focus on the reform of language education in Ukraine. The need to modernize and diversify



the forms and methods of the training of future teachers of English was also pointed out in the Baseline.

The results of the Baseline study allowed the project team to state that there are no common approaches to the assessment of the academic achievements of students in the Methodology course, namely: different aspects of assessment, such as the number of forms and methods; evaluation criteria; content of the summative and formative assessment; the number of points, allocated for the summative and formative assessment. The object of the assessment is mainly students' theoretical knowledge without taking into account the level of the development of their professional skills and abilities; assessment (in particular tests) is aimed at the secondary knowledge, while little attention is paid to the basic professionally-oriented methodological skills of future teachers. There are also no alternative technologies of assessment and self-assessment, such as EPOSTL (European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages) [4, p. 20].

It has to be mentioned that the teachers of English usually face problems because of poor methodological training of insufficient mastering of teaching techniques and methods. When the young teacher prepares for the lesson, he or she cannot prioritize tasks and objectives.

Before we start describing the innovative character of the Methodology Curriculum, it is important to refer to the definition of "innovation" as it is. Thus, innovation is a process of translating an idea or invention into a good service that creates value or for which customers will pay. To be called an innovation, an idea must be replicable at an economical cost and must satisfy a specific need. Innovation involves deliberate application of information, imagination and initiative in deriving greater or different values from resources, and includes all processes by which new ideas are generated and converted into useful products. In business, innovation often results when ideas are applied by the company in order to further satisfy the needs and expectations of the customers [1]. Steve Brophy states that "pedagogical innovation is a significant positive change to the way that we lead people to a place where they can learn for themselves" [5].

Innovative Methodology Curriculum intends to provide students with important professional skills related to methodology, it also gives scope for developing essential life skills.

- Communication skills. The ability to understand and articulate messages, and to transmit information clearly and effectively.
- Time management skills. The ability to plan and use time effectively in order to meet deadlines and successfully complete tasks and assignments.
- Information literacy skills. The ability to locate, evaluate and effectively use information from a variety of sources.
- Teamwork skills. The ability to work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams in order to accomplish a common goal.
- Problem solving skills. The ability to recognise and analyse difficult situations and to find suitable solutions.
- Intercultural awareness. The ability to respond open-mindedly to different ideas and values, respect and embrace social and cultural differences, and use this ability to develop new ideas and new solutions.
- Creativity. The capacity to think and act in innovative ways either alone or with others.
- Critical thinking skills. The ability to ask the right questions, to reason effectively, analyse different points of view and reflect on decisions and processes [3].

Thus, this project has appeared as a response to recent changes and developments in education and society. It has to be mentioned that there are two groups of outcomes – Learning outcomes and Action outcomes. Learning outcomes are as follows: English proficiency of student-teachers and newly-qualified teachers will be improved; their classroom skills and confidence will be enhanced; teachers' digital and social media skills will be developed. As for the Action outcomes the project team expects that newly-qualified teachers will teach more effectively and confidently; engage with colleagues; join networks and meet colleagues overseas; be able to integrate ICT in/outside the classroom.

Talking about future changes we should for sure refer to the past. According to the Baseline study the main components of the Curriculum are Language, Psychology, Methodology, Linguistics, Pedagogy and others; the focus is made on theory rather than practice; the language of instruction is usually Ukrainian; there is little or insufficient experience of teaching at school; lectures and seminars are the prevailing modes of delivery; number of hours, allocated to the course, varies from 104 to 182 in different Universities; teaching

practice takes place in semester 8 and lasts for 6 weeks; students receive the qualification of Philologist or Teacher of English. The most important thing is that the results of the Baseline study showed that methodology training in Bachelor's curriculum occupies only 3 % of the total, as for Master's curriculum it is 5 % [2].

The Methodology curriculum is characterized by a number of innovations, such as:

- Balance of theory and practice
- Updated and new content (establishing a proper relationship between the content of this discipline and pedagogical practice)
- Qualitatively new approach to conducting classroom sessions and organizing self-study hours
- Delivery in English
- Variety of approaches to learning and teaching
- Continuous assessment throughout the Curriculum
- Carefully phased school experience
- New format of the course paper.

The Methodology Curriculum is a three-year course with allocated total number of hours of 600. It presupposes interactive modes of learning and teaching; provides teaching practice throughout the Methodology course; promotes the relationship of Methodology and EFL Curricula.

The Methodology course is an integrated one; it is flexible, dynamic and purposeful. The Curriculum is based on an integrated approach to Pre-Service language teacher education, which promotes the development of cognitive-emotional learning and teaching skills.

Each module of the Curriculum consists of several units. It is important to mention that in this innovative Curriculum the topics of the traditional Methodology course are revised and substantially updated. Moreover, the content of the discipline is complemented with innovative topics that must be taken into account in the process of learning English. All units of the Curriculum can be split into 2 main groups: Reconceptualized and New ones (see table 1.).

Table 1.  
Modules of the Methodology Curriculum

<b>Reconceptualised</b>	<b>Innovative</b>
Principles of CLT	Second Language Acquisition
Teaching Listening	Developing Learner Autonomy

Teaching Reading	Working with Materials
Teaching Writing	Error Analysis and Dealing with Errors
Planning Teaching	Catering for SEN
Teaching Grammar and Vocabulary in Context	Classroom Action Research
Psychological Factors in Language Learning	Planning for CPD
Teaching Young Learners	
Assessment	
Developing Intercultural Competence	
Classroom Management	
ICT in Learning and Teaching	

It goes without saying that School Experience is an essential part of the Methodology course. In the innovative Curriculum School Experience is aimed at linking methodology classes to teaching at school. It includes three stages: Guided Observation (Year 2), Teacher Assistantship (Years 3-4) and Observed Teaching (Year 4). At each of these stages, there are strong links (through tasks) of the Methodology classes to school experience.

The piloting of the Methodology Curriculum started in September 2016. It is supported by the Decree of Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine № 871 (12.08.2015) “On the pedagogical experiment of methodological training of future teachers of English” [4]. The piloting of the Methodology curriculum will go on till the year of 2020.

One of the most important features of the first year of piloting was the continuing monitoring. It has to be mentioned that all the universities, participating in the project, exchanged monitoring visits. The agenda of the visits included Methodology class observation, meetings with the University authorities and teachers-educators, interviews with the students. Bohdan Khmelnytskyi Melitopol State Pedagogical University was visited by members of the project team – representatives of H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University.

Both teachers and students, who take part in the piloting, are satisfied with the results. Here are some of the students’ voices: “I find Methodology classes very beneficial, because I have enriched my vocabulary in a very short period of time. I have become aware of

different techniques and strategies and I have begun to use them in my studying process. This subject is marvelous, because learning languages is my hobby” (Pavlovskiy Andriy); “To my mind, all the topics of our core curriculum are relevant to us as future teachers. Most of all I enjoyed learning about developing learner autonomy. I borrowed some bright ideas how to improve my skills at home” (Melnitska Alyona); “This course is very useful for us not only as for future teachers, but also future parents. We learn such essential things as psychology of pupils, different approaches, methods and techniques of learning a target language, which will help us to teach our future pupils and our own children” (Yatskova Diana); “At first I understood nothing...all that terminology drove me crazy...but step by step I realized that everything that teachers should do has to be done for the learners’ benefits. Frankly speaking Methodology course is my favorite University course now” (Sekirova Anastasia).

The new Methodology Curriculum represents a significant change in the way English teachers are educated. Introducing this kind of change requires time and patience. There will be challenges, objections and setbacks during the process, and there are sure to be people within the universities who will be skeptical about the changes that are needed. The project team is ready for this. It is a necessary feature of any reform. It is best dealt with by good communication, regular consultations with all interest groups so that all voices are heard and understood. But the fact that more and more students and teachers, schools and decision-makers are involved in this process makes the project team sure that Pre-Service language teacher education will lead Ukraine into the European educational space.

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## DEVELOPING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE WITH ENGLISH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

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**Abstract:** The paper focuses on the importance of pragmatic competence acquisition in the EFL classroom and on the great role the textbook plays in this process. It provides the results of an analysis of five English textbooks used in the schools of Moldova in the first five years of pupils’ studying English. The results show that all the textbooks contain some implicit and explicit pragmatic information, which, however, is not equally distributed. Special attention was paid to the treatment of speech acts in the textbooks. The results show that the success of pragmatic competence development depends on several factors revealed in the paper.

**Keywords:** pragmatic competence, pragmatic information, speech acts, metalanguage, pronominal reference, politeness, communication failure.

Since the adoption of the communicative approach, the aim of foreign language teaching in our schools has been to prepare students for communication, i.e. more attention has been paid to developing students’ abilities to understand and produce language in conformity with the situations of speech. In spite of this, teachers continued to focus on developing students’ linguistic competence, one of the reasons in Moldova being the structure and content of the Bacalaureate exam that students pass after twelve years of school education. It is an important exam which, however, excludes the possibility to assess students’ ability to communicate and does not measure the students’ pragmatic competence. This has led to the underestimation of the necessity to teach language in use. Meanwhile linguists have focused