Perspective analysis of preschool specialists training peculiarities in France

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Paper received 02.11.15; Revised 06.11.15; Accepted for publication 12.11.15.

Abstract: The analysis of preschool teachers’ professional training in France in the context of different aspects is presented in the article. Peculiarities of preschool specialists’ professional education are characterised by the author. Characteristics of preschool specialists training and peculiarities of qualification in France allowed to determine main directions of educational policy in the field of preschool teachers training. These include: providing basic education workers in the sector, especially the public sector; ensuring level education according to the Bologna Convention; provide continuing professional development experts involved in educational activities in pre-schools; ensuring the implementation of common European training concept based on competence approach. Some historical events, which influenced on the professional pedagogical education system in France are pointed out, they are: trends in the content transformation into new European conception of teacher education and related reforms in 1989; integration into the European educational space, cooperation with European organizations and joining in education programs of west European countries; realization of generally accepted European concept of "lifelong learning". The perspective of further improvement of preschool teachers’ professional training in France and the positive aspects for adaptation into Ukrainian system of preschool teachers’ education are distinguished: increasing the emphasis on early childhood in pre-service and in-service training; training for inspectors assigned to primary schools should be enhanced with an early childhood module; focus professional development on meeting gaps in initial training—in particular, a focus on the two-year-olds, children with special educational needs and disabilities, outreach to families, and intercultural issues; to examine the possible mismatch between the numbers of students allowed to enter training programmes and the staffing needs of the field; in order for ECEC to be attractive to potential candidates, it must be viewed as a viable profession, with opportunities for salary and career advancement.

Keywords: professional training, preschool teachers, the system of pedagogical education, perspective of adaptation

The development and reformation of educational sector in Ukraine are characterized by the considerable influence of international integration, globalization and expansion of scientific and practical communication between participants of educational systems all over the world. In particular this applies to professional teaching sector, especially to preschool teachers, who ensure the full and harmonious development of preschool children. That’s why the problem of professional training of teachers in the context of integration of national education in the European educational space, the search for mechanisms of adaptation of national teacher education generally accepted in the world demands training of teachers of different educational links clearly is urgent.

Special note is preschool teachers training, that requires not just reform and improvement, but also reformating it like a European concept. All aspects of the reformating training educators in Ukraine require careful study and generalization of international experience in solving this issue, namely mechanisms of building strategy development, improvement and search for further prospects of the industry development.

Analyzing preschool teachers’ professional training it’s important to mention that the problem of European teacher education is net new to Ukrainian scientific investigation. It has been the subject of research N. Abashkina, T. Vakulenko, V. Hamanyuk, N. Kozak (training and further training of teachers, teaching the basics of teacher training in Germany), J. Kishchenko, A. Leontiev, A. Parinova, A. Romanchen, N. Yatsyshyn (modern teacher education reforming, pedagogical skills formation of teachers in the UK), N. Lavrychenko, N. Leshchenko, L. Puhovskoyu, T. Sukhomlinska, I. Taranenko carried out studies that analyzed some aspects of training and of teachers in European countries. But these works were devoted to general teachers’ education, the problem of preschool teachers education was not the subject of separate scientific study.

The mentioned above proves that the problem of preschool teachers training in Europe can be widely and complexly analyzed, as to regional, national characteristics and traditions of education. That’s why in this article the interest of this article will concern a part of the problem that is the preschool teachers’ professional training in France, which is the purpose of the article.

France has an extensive system of early learning: nursery (crèche) or children's centers (childcare centres) for children from 0 to 3, administered social sector and "mother schools" for 2-5-year-olds to be that subordinate and controlled by state departments of education. Children enter primary school at the age of 6 years. "Parent School" was a structural part of the national education system of France from 1881. In 1975 and 1989 visits to preschool children 3-4 and 5-age, under the law was mandatory. In 2004-2005, all children aged 3-4 and 5 years and 26.1 percent of 2-year-olds were enrolled in such institutions. At present free public preschools visited by 80 percent of preschool children [1].

In 1989 the French government decided to merge the preschool and primary education, as a result the system covered children from 2 to 11 years and was divided into three-year training cycle: pre-school, basic or basic and development cycle. Under the new system 5-year-old children who graduate study in the "mother schools" last year combined education with the first two years of primary school, according to a new division it was already a basic cycle of general studying [2]. Modern system of preschool education in France can be shortly characterized in the Table 1.

An asset of ECEC in France, especially for infants and toddlers, is that there are a variety of professionals work-
According to the development of preschool education there has been a change in the state strategy for preschool specialists training. Describing the system of teachers training in France it is important to note that it is closely linked with the general system of education. This is due primarily to the reforms of 1980-80's, which took place in the European teacher education systems were associated with a new concept of teacher education. There was a need to address discrepancies between the high demands of contemporary society to the teacher and his insufficient training, the need to update the content of higher pedagogical education to the requirements [3].

In France, the reform of education was marked by the implementation of the Law "On Education" dated by the 10-th of July 1989, under which only one educational institution of higher education was established - Institute of University teachers training (instituts universitaires de formation des maîtres - IUFM). With the establishing of IUFM such institutions as State Normal School where primary school teachers could get education (ENI), regional educational centers (CPR), which prepared teachers for secondary schools, normal schools of teachers' professional training (ENNA), centers for training teachers of technical education (CFPT) were eliminated. These transformations in teachers’ professional training in France enabled education of maternal and primary schools, colleges, secondary schools, technical and vocational schools for teachers in the walls of one institution of higher education for teaching professions – IUFM.

Before 1991-92 preschool teachers training, who worked in the "mothers’ schools", was implemented by individual programs that differed from those of primary school teachers training. After receiving a high school diploma, students who were going to get a profession of preschool teacher, were enrolled in 2-year training courses of general professionally oriented colleges. After successful completion of these colleges graduates were allowed to work only in the area of preschool education.

With the adoption of the new system in the 1991-92 preschool and primary education, vocational preschool and primary education specialists training has become integrated. The reform of preschool and primary education implied that training of pre-school and primary school teachers had to take place primarily at universities within three years of...
studding and further professional training for 2 years. At present no matter where a future teacher is going to get a job work, at the "mothers’ schools" or at elementary schools, professional education totally lasts for 5 years of pedagogical universities, which is a prerequisite and accepted as a norm in Europe [4., c. 22-24].

Higher teacher education in France comprises two independent, but at the same time interrelated levels of future teachers training in universities and institutes of university type. In order to enter these institutions the person must have a diploma of a three-year university degree (licentiate degree in the chosen discipline) or equivalent national diploma of other university. Most candidates entering the IUFM, with a master's degree, which indicates the completion of their second-level higher education (4 years at university). The time for studding at IUFM is 2 years. The first course is mainly devoted to theoretical and practical training of students to one of six competition for getting one of the following diplomas: parent and teacher primary school (CAPE); high school teacher (CAPES), which makes it possible to work as a teacher in high school or college, or teacher documentary centers Information and Documentation school institutions; teacher technological subjects in high schools or colleges of technology; Head of Academic Lyceum (CRCPF) [5].

As shown in Table 2 below, staff training and working conditions vary greatly depending on the type of ECEC. Characteristics of preschool specialists training and peculiarities of qualification in France, which are presented in Tab. 2, allows to determine main directions of educational policy in the field of preschool teachers training. These include: providing basic education workers in the sector, especially the public sector; ensuring level education according to the Bologna Convention; provide continuing professional development experts involved in educational activities in pre-schools; ensuring the implementation of common European training concept based on competence approach.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of person</th>
<th>Initial training</th>
<th>Age group targeted</th>
<th>Professional domain</th>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>In-service training</th>
<th>Remuneration and status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instituteurs</td>
<td>Bac + 2 yrs</td>
<td>2-6 yrs</td>
<td>Ecole maternelle</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>Professional development 56 weeks over career</td>
<td>Cat. B State public employee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professeurs des écoles</td>
<td>Licence (3 yr college degree) + training at IUFM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cat. A State public employee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATSEM</td>
<td>Early childhood</td>
<td>2-6 years</td>
<td>Ecole maternelle</td>
<td>Communes or groups of communes</td>
<td>Right to professional development training; sometimes management training to become a director of an ECEC setting</td>
<td>Cat. C local public employees (soon Cat. A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puéricultrices</td>
<td>Nurse or midwife + 1 yr of specialisation</td>
<td>Children at all ages, especially those under 3</td>
<td>Collectivités locales (communes, départements) Non-profit associations</td>
<td>Right to professional development training; sometimes management training to become a director of an ECEC setting</td>
<td>Catégorie B local public employers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educateurs de jeunes enfants</td>
<td>27 months post-bac in a training centre</td>
<td>Children under 7</td>
<td>All setting serving children under 6 (crèches, haltes, etc)</td>
<td>Collectivités locales (communes, départements) Non-profit associations</td>
<td>Right to professional development training; sometimes management training to become a director of an ECEC setting</td>
<td>Catégorie B local public employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliaires depuéricultrices</td>
<td>1 year post-BEPC</td>
<td>Children of all ages, especially those under 3</td>
<td>Collectivités locales (communes, départements) Associations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Catégorie C local public employers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistantes maternelles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: French Background Report, 2003

There are several factors influencing education policy professional training of pre-school education in France, among them being:

– trends in the content transformation into new European conception of teacher education and related reforms in 1989;
– integration into the European educational space, cooperation with European organizations and joining in education programs of west European countries;
– one of the defining peculiarities of modern preschool teachers’ training in France is realization of generally accepted European concept of "lifelong learning", which affects the following for the first two lines of educational policy. Implementing the concept will ensure competitiveness, flexibility and mobility of teachers of various parts [6].

Despite the coordinated system of training, presence in it of the flexible mechanisms of professional training of preschool education, preschool education experts and researchers have expressed concern that the preschools prepare teachers to work with children of preschool age on the model of the school system.

The next problem of professional training of teachers of preschool establishments in France is non-compliance and the gap between the teaching profession preschool and other specialists who work in the service of pre-school sector, especially those working with children from birth to 3 years (e.g. care-workers, nursery (crèche). Typically, preschool teachers receive a 2-on academic university education; nursery staff gets a year of free training in childcare and are certified by the Ministry of Health. These differences in training as educational and hygienic orientation, duration of study in different groups of services concern the experts, sets new requirements for training specialists of preschool education to align educational and other services in pre-school sector.

As noted in our earlier analysis, the training of staff in early care settings would benefit from more emphasis on early childhood development and pedagogy to balance the health orientation of the current preparation programmes,
In addition, the lack of pre-service training and limited professional development opportunities for both “assistantes maternelles” and those engaged in “garde à domicile” need to be addressed urgently. There is the necessity to encourage public authorities (national, departmental, local) to provide incentives for individual providers to join family day care networks (RAM), a crèche familiale, or establish forms of linkages with other centre-based settings (crèches, multi-accueil, halte-garderie), in order to reduce the isolation of providers and children and improve the quality of this form of provision in France.

The policy suggestions in the area of further improvement of preschool teachers of “écoles maternelle” professional training are as follows:

- increase the emphasis on early childhood in pre-service and in-service training; training for inspectors assigned to primary schools should be enhanced with an early childhood module;
- focus professional development on meeting gaps in initial training—in particular, a focus on the two-year-olds, children with special educational needs and disabilities, outreach to families, and intercultural issues;
- to examine the possible mismatch between the numbers of students allowed to enter training programmes and the staffing needs of the field;
- in order for ECEC to be attractive to potential candidates, it must be viewed as a viable profession, with opportunities for salary and career advancement.

**Conclusions.** The investigation of preschool teachers’ professional training in France showed out peculiarities of preschool specialists’ professional education: active integration and transformation into new European conception of teacher education and related reforms in 1989; integration into the European educational space; trends to the realization of generally accepted European concept of "lifelong learning”.

Main historical events in preschool teachers’ professional training in France are connected with the Law "On Education" dated by the 10-th of July 1989, under which only one educational institution of higher education was established – Institute of University teachers training (IUFM).

Positions of further improvement of preschool teachers’ professional training in France and which can be used as positive aspects for adaptation into Ukrainian system of preschool teachers’ education are concerned to: increase the emphasis on early childhood in pre-service and in-service training; professional development; ECEC to be attractive to potential candidates (carrier building).

The analysis does not provide a holistic view of the peculiarities of preschool teachers’ education in France. The problem of educational services provision in the field of pre-school education and higher education institutions, where future employees of these institutions train, are to be on a discuss and analysis. These aspect demands separate investigation and is the perceptivity of our further scientific interest in this direction.

**REFERENCES**