

## PEDAGOGY

## Twelve-year General Secondary Education Model in Unified School Project in Ukraine (1917-1920)

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**Abstract.** The author of the article reveals the main items of the developed twelve-year general secondary education model on the basis of the analysis of the Unified School Project in Ukraine prepared by the education governing bodies. The Unified School Project in Ukraine (based on the following principles: unified school, national, humanistic, democratic, educational, labour (active), individualization and differentiation of training), could have created favourable conditions for the development of national school in general, pupils' inborn abilities and aptitudes in particular, and at the same time it could have optimally combined universal (academic) education with a core (profile) one.

**Keywords:** *twelve-year general secondary education model, the Unified School Project in Ukraine, the Ukrainian Revolution (1917-1920)*

At present under conditions of innovative development of school education in Ukraine the historical-pedagogical knowledge in state educational policy is an actual topic while determining its conceptual principles and prediction vectors. We consider it appropriate to analyse the events taken place during the 1917 – 1920 period (the Ukrainian Revolution age): it is necessary for understanding the factors and causes of unrealized projects concerning the development of Ukrainian school, their content in order to use them creatively in the course of modern lawmaking. At that time Ukrainian educationalists using the best national and foreign pedagogical experience developed a unique document known as the Unified School Project in Ukraine that was not introduced into school practice because of changes of socio-political paradigm in society development and for many years it remained unknown to the teaching world. Taking into consideration the realities of the inherited imperial school education the authors of the Project suggested a new concept of school education in the context of pedagogical discourse; it was a twelve-year general secondary education system.

Historiographical search has showed that a number of historians (N. Rotar, 1996; A. Pyzhyk, 1998; Y. Teliachyi, 2000; V. Bohuslavska, 2001 and others) and historians of pedagogy (S. Filonenko, 1995; M. Sobchynska, 1995; L. Berezivska, 2008 and others) describing various aspects of education development during the period of the Ukrainian Revolution have analysed the Unified School Project more or less. The main aim of our article is to analyse the Unified School Project in Ukraine and to reveal the basic items of the concept of school education, that is a twelve-year general secondary education model, prepared by the educationalists in the course of Ukrainian statehood development.

We would like to tell a few words about the history of creation of the Unified School Project in Ukraine, although we have already written about it in our previous publications [1]. First of all, we would mention the main periods of its development: an initial intensive one taken place during the period of existing the Central Council of Ukraine (from the beginning of March, 1917 till 29 April, 1918); a passive one taken place during the period of Pavlo Skoropadskyi

Hetmanate existing (from 29 April, 1918 till 13 December, 1918); final intensive one taken place during the period of the Directorate of the Ukrainian National Republic (UNR) existing (from 13 November, 1918 till the end of 1920th).

The project's author, Deputy General Secretary of Education P. Kholodnyi, had studied the peculiarities of foreign secondary school systems. For instance, the Danish twelve-year general secondary school had a three-level education system: a five-year primary school education, a four-year school education including the English and German languages and a three-year school education with three branches (a classical one, with new languages of studying and a branch training in natural sciences and mathematics); in Norway a twelve-year general secondary school had a three-level education system: a three-year primary school education and a nine-year secondary school education consisting of a five-year and four-year (classic and higher) education systems; in America a twelve-year general secondary school had a three-level education system: a four-year primary school education, a four-year high school education and a four-year middle school education (the transition from one school into another one is free); in Switzerland a twelve-year general secondary school had a two-level education system: a six-year general primary school education with parallel departments and separate programmes at senior high school for the transition to a six-year middle school education; in Germany there were a Mannheim system (there were different types of schools (14) for those children who were "week-minded, unable to study, talented" and others) and a system suggested by Professor Rhine (he suggested an idea of six-year compulsory primary school education system where pupils could have studied foreign languages starting from the third year of schooling, at the same time teachers had to identify children's talents for foreign language learning; after finishing this school some pupils could have continued their studying in the 7-8 forms of an eight-year compulsory public school, others – in a four-year non-classical school and the rest – in a six-year non-classical or classical secondary school) [4].

Taking into consideration foreign experience and the peculiarities of school education of that time

P. Kholodnyi suggested an idea of creation of a seven-year general secondary school which would have been built on the basis of observations of a child's environment in accordance with the requirements of life. After finishing such school some children could have stopped their studying, while others could have continued it at a four-year gymnasiums, technical or agricultural schools, teachers' seminary. Such kind of an approach could have ensured the development of pupils' inborn abilities, aptitudes and interests which would have helped to define their professional potentials.

During the period of Pavlo Skoropadskyi Hetmanate existing, as S. Posternak, an eyewitness and an active participant of these processes, mentioned many plans and projects of the previous government were neglected and conservative methods and points of view returned; the question about school reform was put off, there was a bureaucratic character of education management; the Unified School and Nation-wide Education Committee stopped its work [2, p. 13.]. Of course, it is a fair but a contradictory assessment at the same time. The facts show that the Nation-wide Education Committee was working and P. Kholodnyi, the author of the Unified School Project, continued to work on it.

Since coming into power despite difficult internal and external socio-political conditions the Directorate of UNR continued the Unified School Project development initiated by the Central Council of Ukraine. First of all, we should mention that the reform of school education in the time of the Directorate of UNR (from 13 November, 1918 till the end of 1920th) was carried out on the basis of those pedagogical principles which had been developed in the time of the Central Council of Ukraine, that is the ideas of the Ukrainian teaching world became the basis for the school reform.

In the time of the Directorate of UNR the Unified School Project was worked by the School Questionnaire Committee under the Ministry of National Education; it submitted proposals to the Council of Minister for consideration. In fact, the coordinate centre of the Unified School Project development was a Committee for technical implementation of the school reform in Ukraine (August – November 1919) which consisted of 24 famous teachers.

On the basis of teachers' ideas expressed at the Teachers' Congress the Department of Higher and Secondary Schools headed by A. Syniavskyi, suggested the creation of a two-level secondary school education system (he proposed the 1<sup>st</sup> one to be a four-year higher primary school system, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> one to be a four-year school system with furcation according to the following spheres: humanitarian, non-classical, economic and linguistic).

We should note that in September 1919 the Unified School Project which consisted of three volumes was prepared for publishing. However, only the first volume was published because of socio-political circumstances [3, p. 5]. Let us analyse the main principles of the Unified School Project in Ukraine. It consists of a Preface, a chapter under the title "Explanation to Educational Curriculums and Programs of the Unified School", a main part and a subchapter under the title "Role of Science, Religion, Art, Gymnastic Exercises and Development of Civic Duty in School Education", curriculums and programmes for the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> levels, explanations to them, and an

appendix – the Dictionary for Primary School.

The basic principles of the unified Ukrainian secondary school grounded earlier are legitimated in the main part: education is accessible to all people (regardless of sex and parents' status) and its levels are connected with each other: educational (providing knowledge about "treasures" and "beauty" of the Ukrainian nation on the natural basis), national-state (religious, moral, physical, civic education on the same basis), active (close to the child's life, active (labour) principle of training, manual labour is possible as a subject).

The defining feature of the Project is its child-centred orientation. It is mentioned that "Children's world, this microcosm with its own good and evil, is that field where a teacher should work. It would be an unjustified teacher's mistake to neglect this world; while giving knowledge a teacher should take into consideration this world. ...He should answer the children's questions and help them in receiving knowledge." [3, p. 4]. The authors of the document believed that in the course of the educational process the individuality of a child, its various abilities should be taken into account. In their opinion the content of education should be based on "the elements taken from a child's life and from everything surrounding it", first of all the child must know "about the life of its region and its nation on the Ukrainian land" [3, p. 5]. So, pupils should be taught on such a natural basis.

The authors of the Project argued that "there is no reason to organize different types of schools for individual social groups of children", as it was during the Tsarism period. In their opinion, the Unified School is a principle of education when all children regardless of their sex and their parents' "civil status" would be able to receive primary and higher education [3, p. 6.]. At the same time, the authors suggested the following "variations": it was possible that city and rural schools differed from each other, but not during the first years of studying to ease the transition from rural to city schools and vice versa. They proved the appropriateness of compulsory education on the first two levels. And the transition to the third level of training, in their opinion, should be determined by the abilities of the children and their desire to continue their education in the speciality and as a result the number of vocational schools was planned to increase.

The authors of the Project believed that a determinant factor in the process of a child's self-realization is teaching in their native language "which a child will use to show its feelings, at the same time the child's soul will be developed, and that is the task of a school" [3, p. 7–8]. They distinguished between the concepts of "native language" and "family language", they demonstrated the necessity and advantages of training in their native language, creation of national schools.

The programme for the first 8 years of studying at secondary school was supposed to consist mostly of propaedeutic courses. The content of such courses as native language, history, geography, natural science, arithmetic, geometry should have been based on the material close to a child. At the 3<sup>rd</sup> school level it was suggested to introduce systematic scientific concentric courses, the main aim of which is a general formal development of pupils, at the same time there was an idea to introduce school profiling according to the following spheres: humanistic (humanitar-

ian – L. B.), non-classical, economic, for girls (as a possible variant). It was stressed that there was no need to develop identical curriculums for the 3<sup>rd</sup> school level for all schools of Ukraine as “it is necessary to take into account children’s individual abilities formed during the year which corresponds to this level” [3, p. 11]. The Project presents the recommended number of hours necessary for studying subjects at the 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> school levels and at the same time it was noted that the number of hours necessary for studying different subjects at the 3<sup>rd</sup> school level varied in accordance with its spheres (variants, variations).

In our opinion, in the subchapter under the title “Variety of Courses at the 3<sup>rd</sup> school level” the authors grounded in detail organizational and content characteristics of a differentiated approach to training in 9-12 forms of the College, the ways of creation of different types (variants) of forms or schools. First of all, compulsory subjects for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> school levels are defined (native language and literature, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, geography, history), which “are that pillar on which a school building is kept, it is forbidden to destroy them, it is possible to make their programmes shorter or to enlarge them” [3, p. 22]. But such subjects as political economy, philosophic propaedeutics, Latin and others can be removed or replaced by other subjects in accordance with the tasks of a school. It is important that the authors convincingly predicted positive results of differentiated approach suggesting the following several arguments: training at the 3<sup>rd</sup> school level would be based on the child’s interest shown while studying at the 2<sup>nd</sup> school level to this or that formal science; the school would be active as it would answer “the variety of children’s abilities”; teaching pupils at humanitarian or non-classical schools according to their aptitudes would influence their general development in a positive way [3, p. 22].

There was one more way suggested for the realization of external differentiation; according to it children should have been trained taking into consideration their abilities at non-classical schools, classical gymnasiums and commercial schools which were class educational establishments during the Tsarism period. We consider it positive that the Ukrainian governments were not going to eliminate these establishments, but were planning to develop and improve them, to prepare appropriate curriculums and programmes.

Unlike the state educational policy of the Imperial government, when there was only mixed primary school, the Ukrainian governments declared that the best form of education was a single school for both sexes, at the same time schools for girls and boys remained. The authors recommended to develop identical curriculums and programmes for the 8<sup>th</sup> forms for the girls’, boys’ and mixed schools; they also suggested introducing differentiation in its different variations on the 3<sup>rd</sup> school level. At the same time they were against the transition of pupils from a mixed school to a separate one and vice versa [3, p. 22–23].

We consider it to be a positive fact that the privileges concerning entering higher school were abolished, i.e. the pupils had equal rights after finishing schools of any type. Entrance rules should have been developed by higher school teaching staff (whether to allow pupils to enter higher school without passing exams or to fix necessary examinations for them) [3, p. 23].

The authors of the document grounded the importance of general subjects (native language, mathematics, natural disciplines, history) for child’s development; the Project contained an approximate number of hours necessary for studying each subject at secondary schools of all levels. The approaches to general curriculums in religion and morality, art, physical training, foreign languages are explained.

On the whole, school was supposed to be a twelve-year one and it should have had three levels: the 1<sup>st</sup> level – a four-year junior basic school, the 2<sup>nd</sup> level – a four-year senior basic school, these levels were the structural parts of a basic school, after finishing it pupils were allowed to continue training at a vocational school or at the 3<sup>rd</sup> level of a four-year College with polyfurcation (differentiation according to profiles), after finishing which pupils were allowed to continue their studying at higher school. Vocational school was separated from a general secondary one.

When the first volume of the document was published in April 1920 the second volume was ready to be printed. However, as P. Kholodnyi noted in the Preface (21 March, 1921), the manuscript was lost because of urgent evacuation from Vinnytsia (in June) and Kamianetz and some more leavings for other cities; but the draft document and its protocols were saved and the restoration of the Project was started in Tarnov in December. In the course of intense work done under the guidance of P. Kholodnyi the second volume was finished, it contained programmes on natural history, hygiene, bookkeeping, commercial arithmetic, law science, chemistry, technology.

In the subchapter under the title “Basis for the Structure of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Level” (the second volume of the Unified School Project) the authors described the details of the Unified School model of the 3<sup>rd</sup> level as a four-year College with core (profile) departments (three humanistic, non-classical, economic and for girls) where systematic courses were taught. The authors of the Project were sure that “systematic courses play a great role in the development of pupil’s intellect, because they help to form various schemes of thinking; depending on methods of this or that science scientific knowledge and images connected with them influence pupil’s noble sentiments” [5, folio 8]. It was suggested to divide all the subjects studying at the College into two groups: main and additional subjects. The main subjects (natural science, chemistry, physics, geography and history) should have been taught at all departments in accordance with the core direction; additional subjects (new and ancient languages, philosophical propaedeutics, law science, political economy, pedagogy, descriptive geometry, cosmography and others); it was connected with pedagogical views, certain school traditions, environment of pupils. The equal hours were planned for teaching the following required subjects: religion, art and gymnastic exercises. Those subjects which were “closely connected with life” and influenced the connection between school and environment were considered practical courses.

At humanistic (humanitarian) department it was suggested to combine additional subjects (new and ancient languages, philosophical propaedeutics, law science) in order to create different variants of the department, to increase the number of hours for teaching world history, written language, languages, but to reduce them for teaching

mathematics and to take chemistry away [5, folios 13–14]. As for the teaching new languages, it should have been agreed with the 2<sup>nd</sup> school level. The annotation to the curriculum for the humanistic (humanitarian) department where only one language was supposed to be taught contained the information that a new language “A” is French or German; taking into consideration that classes (40 pupils) were divided into two groups for practical work it was suggested that a teacher should spend only one hour per two weeks with each pupil. It was planned to introduce additional subjects at the economic department (new languages, technology, political economy, bookkeeping, philosophical propaedeutics, natural history, commercial arithmetic); the number of hours for teaching world history, literature and history should have been reduced in comparison with the humanistic department and the number of hours for teaching mathematics should also have been reduced in comparison with the non-classical department. It was planned to introduce such additional subjects at the department for girls as new languages, chemistry, pedagogy, and such practical subjects as housekeeping, stitchwork; the number of hours for teaching drawing was suggested to be reduced in comparison with the non-classical department [5, folio 18].

It was planned to issue the 3<sup>rd</sup> volume, which should have included the programmes in philosophical propae

deutics, the English language, pedagogy, gymnastic exercises, stitchwork and housekeeping. There is an information that the Unified School Project in Ukraine was realized in Kamianets starting from 1919–20 school year. To sum it up, we should note that the Unified School Project in Ukraine, developed on a democratic basis during the 1917-1919 period, accumulated the best achievements of foreign and national pedagogical science and practice. And a well-grounded model of the twelve-year general secondary school with a three-level education system should have ensured internal and external interschool (according to the level and profiles) differentiation. In our opinion, the Unified School Project in Ukraine based on the appropriate principles (unified school, national, humanistic, democratic, educational, labour (active) principles, principles of individualization and differentiation of training) could have created favourable conditions for the development of a national school in general, pupils' natural abilities and aptitudes, and at the same time it could have optimally combined a universal (academic) education with a core one. We consider that in general knowledge about the document under consideration, in particular about the general secondary education model does not only enrich the historical-pedagogical knowledge, but it can be helpful while developing theoretical principles of the core school, personality oriented system of education in Ukraine. This will be discussed in our further publications.

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