

EdCW 2020**International Scientific and Practical Conference Education in a Changing World: Global Challenges and National Priorities****BILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS**

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Abstract

Professional development of university teachers remains one of the universal mechanisms for advanced staff training at a university. In Russia, this area is presently experiencing serious difficulties caused by the lack of teaching staff, insufficient mechanisms for the design of up-to-date professional development programs, and low motivation of a certain category of academic staff to improve their qualifications. The most serious problems could be identified in the regional HEIs, which have lower level of financial and human resources than HEIs in large cities. Professional development at Novgorod State University (Russia) is aimed at the educational needs of various segments and age groups of the population of Veliky Novgorod and the Novgorod region. University teachers are mostly offered professional development programs of mass formats to fulfill the state requirements for providing advanced training in the field of ICT, inclusive education, and project-oriented activities. One of the ways to tailor professional development to the needs of university teachers could be offered with bilingual education programs based on the competence approach. The article dwells on a bilingual module program aimed at intensive professional development for the teaching staff in accordance with the most relevant core competences. Each module integrates development of knowledge and skills included in the structure of a certain competence, ensuring the implementation of a specific function that is part of the professional standard.

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1. Introduction

Professional development has become one of the most effective ways to implement the principle of continuity in education. If well-organized and correlated content-wise with the demands of the labor market, a multilevel professional development system can provide flexibility, mobility, innovation, and integrity in ensuring the processes of advanced professional development for different age groups in the most demanded types of professional activities. Professional development system can become one of the tools for sustainable economic development of regions through the knowledge, skills and abilities update to changes in various spheres of society. In this regard, it is necessary to consider professional development more broadly than as more or less regular advanced training activities organized in accordance with the temporary requirements (Dochkin, 2018). Professional development can exist in a range of identified and categorized models: training; award-bearing; deficit; cascade; standards-based; coaching/mentoring; community of practice; action research; transformative (Kennedy, 2005).

A number of trends in professional development of university teachers in the USA, Germany, and Great Britain are of interest for Russia which strives for increasing the independence of university teachers in their professional development, for focusing on personally relevant objectives that meet the present-day requirements of educational environment (Higher Education in Europe, 2017; Khatsrinova, 2014; Kulikova, 2017; Sherayzina et al., 2018; Yeremina, & Yalovega, 2018; Zhizhina, 2015). The trends which take into account international experience in the professional development of university teachers in Russia include diversification of the system of professional development; the growing diversity in the content and process of professional development, corresponding to the needs of universities and personal needs and capabilities of the university teachers; integration into the world educational community and the mobility of teachers (Khatsrinova, 2014). The adaptation of international educational programs and enrichment of the content of professional development activities with the help of research and educational materials published in other countries internationalize professional development within the frameworks of competitive, content, linguistic, or integrative models of HEI internationalization (Pevzner et al., 2018).

The development of education system in accordance with the eBologna strategy implies the active introduction of distance and blended learning, as well as the implementation of the principle of virtual mobility. During the 2020 pandemic of COVID 19, virtual mobility has become more relevant than before. Research on virtual mobility underlines that its main goal is the exchange of knowledge and the improvement of intercultural competences; virtual mobility can ensure the recognition of the university in the educational space and enhance capitalization of the educational process (Dudysheva, 2012; Sakhapov et al., 2016; Tereseviciene et al., 2011, 2013). Virtual mobility implies networking with foreign educational institutions and requires a high level of foreign language proficiency. In the modern world, the main language of scientific communication is English. According to statistics, 59.9% of all sites on the Internet use English as the main language, whereas web-sites in Russian make up 8.7%; the use of all other world languages is below the 4.0% (Historical trends in the usage of content languages for websites, 2020). Presently, a university teacher has a need not only for general knowledge of English, but the ability to use it as a language of scientific research and communication. In this context, academic staff of the university could be offered professional development programs in bilingual format which, in

accordance with Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) concept, use a foreign language for expanding the professionally relevant knowledge and ensuring scientific communication (Baker, 2011).

2. Problem Statement

Professional development of university teachers remains one of the universal mechanisms for advanced staff training at a university. As rightly noted in (Ignatovich & Lopuha, 2015), in Russia, this area is presently experiencing serious difficulties caused by the lack of teaching staff, insufficient mechanisms for the design of up-to-date professional development programs, and low motivation of a certain category of academic staff to improve their qualifications. The most serious problems could be identified in the regional HEIs, which have lower level of financial and human resources than HEIs in large cities.

Professional development at the regional HEI Novgorod State University (Russia) is aimed at the educational needs of various strata and age groups of the population of Veliky Novgorod and the Novgorod region. University teachers are mostly offered professional development programs of mass formats to fulfill the state requirements for providing advanced training in the field of ICT, inclusive education, and project-oriented activities. Professional development system pays less attention to the peculiarities of academic staff work and the urgent needs that have professionally significant character. The motivation of teachers to participate in personally significant and professionally relevant training programs is getting low. The given research singles out the problem of tailoring professional development programs to the needs of university teachers through bilingual educational formats based on the competence approach.

3. Research Questions

- What is the place of professional development in the strategy of the university modernization?
- What are the features and forms of professional development in a Russian university?
- What competences could be developed with the help of a bilingual educational program?

4. Purpose of the Study

At present, the system of professional development of university teachers should focus not only on updating the knowledge of academic staff but also on the development of competences vital in the context of the digitalization and diversification of society, economy, and education. The research purpose is to analyze the features of professional development system at the regional university and to analyze the possibilities of using a new bilingual educational program in professional development of university teachers.

5. Research Methods

The research was based on theoretical analysis of research sources and normative documents on the research topic. There was empirical study of current Russian and international experience in the field of professional development education and of the professional development system organized in Novgorod State University (Russia). Statistical methods included quantitative and qualitative data processing, graphic presentation of the results.

6. Findings

In 2017, Novgorod State University (hereinafter – NovSU) was included in the group of flagship Russian universities. The flagship university program sponsored by the Russian government included such areas as modernizing education, research, and innovation areas, development of human resources, transformation of the university management system (including change management at the stage of university merger), improvement of university facilities and socio-cultural infrastructure, as well as development of local communities, urban, and regional environment (Baryshnikova et al., 2019; Flagship universities in Russia, 2020). Professional development of university staff was to become an important part of university modernization and transformation.

According to the “Development Program of Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University for the period 2017-2021”, professional development activities could make NovSU both a platform for retraining and improving professional qualifications of its staff and a regional center for support of adults with an active life position in their desire to master the up-to-date level of knowledge, including on-line education (Development Program of Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University for the period 2017-2021, 2017). The current scope of professional development programs offered at NovSU is quite wide; it can meet the educational needs of different segments of the population of Veliky Novgorod and the Novgorod region.

In the given research we consider the professional development of university teaching staff. In the period of 2017-2019, the NovSU academic staff was quite stable in numbers and consisted of 550-600 people. One of the qualitative indicators of university teaching staff in Russia is the number of teachers holding a scientific degree. At the end of 2017, the percentage of NovSU teaching staff with a Candidate of Sciences degree was 55.45%; 17.54% of the teaching staff had a Doctor of Sciences degree. In 2018, these indicators slightly changed and amounted to 52.26% (Candidate of Sciences) and 18.39% (Doctor of Sciences), respectively. There is a positive trend in terms of the increase in the number of teaching staff with a Doctor of Sciences degree. However, in 2018, among the teaching staff of 626 people, the share of teachers aged 30-40 years (the category ‘young researcher and educator’) decreased to 6.8%, only 13 people among teaching staff were under the age of 29 (2%) (NovSU Report, 2018, 2019). This value fully reflects the all-Russian tendency of the aging of university teaching staff (Ezrokh, 2019).

In Russia, professional development is the sole responsibility of a university teacher, which is recorded in the standard job descriptions of a teaching assistant, teacher, senior teacher, associate professor, and professor. The performance of this duty by the teaching staff affects the annual assessment

of the effectiveness of the department performance (department rating), which is organized at NovSU with the aim of identifying and appraising the units that make the greatest contribution to the overall university ranking. However, at NovSU, there is a certain discrepancy between the rating system of departments and the effective contract system for the teaching staff. The effective contract of a university teacher contains three indicators “Methodological activity”, “Research activity”, and “Organizational activity”. Activities related to professional development are not singled out among the indicators and, as a result, are not taken into account when setting a stimulating bonus to a university teacher. In our opinion, it unfavorably affects the motivation of teachers to participate in personally significant and professionally relevant training programs. The majority of teachers take a passive stand in this sense, relying on the university for the organization of mass format professional development activities.

In 2017, NovSU implemented several mass format professional development programs for its teaching staff: “Inclusive higher education: organization and support of the educational process”, “University as an object of management. Modern tendencies, problems, and development mechanisms”, “Quality management system of the university based on MS ISO 9000 series. Internal audit of the quality management system” (NovSU Report, 2018). In 2018, in order to improve the quality of academic staff development, NovSU organized professional development programs “Implementation of project-based education at universities”, “Project management”, “Use of ICT in the electronic educational environment”, “Practice and methods of training personnel in regards to the World Skills Russia standard”, “Toolkit for planning and implementation of mechanisms for sustainable economic development of the university”, “Information technology in project management”, “Quality management system of the university based on the ISS ISO 9000 series. Internal audit of the QMS”, and “Tutoring within the competence model NTI ‘University 20.35’” (NovSU Report, 2019). The Table 01 presents the data on professional development organized at NovSU in the period of 2016-2018 as shown in the self-monitoring reports of the university available from the open sources.

Table 01. Professional Development at NovSU in 2016-2018

	Total			NovSU staff		
	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018
Participants of professional development programs, out of whom	2308	2569	2632	286	211	468
Participated in the program lasting from 16 to 72 academic hours	581	658	484	0	202	22
Participated in the program lasting from 72 academic hours and more	1727	1938	2148	286	9	446
Participated in the internship	0	0	0	0	0	0
Participants of retraining programs (from 250 to 500 academic hours)	117	226	192	0	56	0
Participants of retraining programs (from 500 academic hours and more)	250	292	364	0	0	0
Total	2675	3087	3188	286	267	468
%, NovSU staff of the total number of persons who improved their qualifications				12.4%	8.6%	17.8%

Given the overall positive quantitative dynamics of the number of NovSU teaching staff who participated in the professional development programs, a point of serious concern is the ratio of NovSU teaching staff who took advantage of professional development opportunities which is on average 13% of the total number of professional development services users. The year 2018 increase is explained by the mass training of the NovSU academic staff in the program “Using ICT in the electronic educational environment” (397 people). A similar massive professional development was organized in 2017: 186 people were trained in the course “Inclusive higher education: organization and support of the educational process”.

Active implementation of mass teaching of the academic staff in various professional development programs has both positive and negative sides. The simultaneous immersion of the teaching staff in educational content related to the digital transformation of the university and an inclusive educational environment should favorably affect the implementation of more flexible processes and lead to changes in the corporate culture (Fuchs, 2016). However, despite the general positive effect of mass training programs for teaching staff, such an approach to the organization of life-long learning does not allow individualizing the educational process and making it truly personally significant, particularly, if the massive professional development is compulsory and does not imply the choice of forms and methods of teaching

Nowadays, it is essential for an educator to be competent in such aspects as global mobility and acculturation, integration, inclusion, and heterogeneity in society. Subject and intercultural competences are the assets that are necessary in today’s global knowledge economy and multicultural professional environment. According to the results of the study “Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competences” (PIAAC) conducted in 2011-2015, the most important task of teaching the adult population of Russia is to develop competencies associated with solving problems in a technologically rich environment and mastering information and computer technologies (OECD, 2019). Sustainable development is essential for the education systems of all countries of the world, as stated in the relevant documents signed by almost all governments as a commitment for the period up to 2030. The core competencies that are required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals are transverse, multi-functional, and context-independent competencies (Education for Sustainable Development Goals. Learning Objectives, 2017). The Russian higher education system has already accumulated rich experience in the development and implementation of educational programs based on a competence approach. Federal Law No. 273-FZ extends this practice to professional development sphere. As stated in part 4 of Article 76 of Federal Law No. 273, professional development program should be aimed at improving and (or) obtaining new competencies necessary for professional activity, and (or) improving the professional level within the existing qualifications. The structure of the programs should indicate the planned result, which is formulated in a competency-based form for all types of continuing education programs, including short-term programs (Federal Law, 2012). Bilingual educational programs help develop critical thinking, which is one of the key competences in fulfilling the aims of contemporary education (Hurajova, 2015). These key competencies also include cooperation competence, self-awareness competence, forecasting competence, normative competence, strategic competence, and problem-solving competence (Mukhlayeva & Gavrikov, 2017).

A bilingual 'Campus International' program developed at NovSU within the framework of flagship university project aims to provide intensive professional development for the NovSU teaching staff in accordance with the most relevant core competences. The program consists of five modules: the 'Intensive English Language' module and the bilingual modules 'Intercultural Business Communication', 'International Business Etiquette', 'Sustainable Development', 'Diversity in the University Context'. Each separate module of the 'Campus International' program is designed in accordance with CLIL concept and is intended for the integrated development of knowledge and skills included in the structure of a certain competence. The entire educational program consists of 360 academic hours (72 academic hours per one module), including contact and independent work of the student, and the assessment time. The study of the program should start with the 'Intensive English Language' course, whereas bilingual modules can be combined and studied in any order. The minimum requirement for obtaining a professional development certificate is the study of 2 modules (mandatory 'Intensive English Language' course and any bilingual module).

Each module of the 'Campus International' program is aimed at developing from one to three competencies. The module 'Intensive English language course' is aimed at developing communication strategies and tactics, rhetorical, stylistic and linguistic norms and techniques characteristic for different areas of communication. The students will develop abilities to create, edit, abstract, systematize, and transform all types of texts of the official business and scientific style. The module 'International business etiquette' forms the ability to communicate effectively in Russian and foreign languages for solving problems of interpersonal and intercultural interaction. Learning outcomes include the skills of qualified organizational support of international conferences, workshops, and discussions. After studying the module 'Intercultural business communication' the students will be ready to organize a team work in the field of their professional activities, tolerantly perceive social, ethnic, confessional and cultural differences, be ready for intercultural and interethnic communication and willing to overcome the influence of stereotypes and carry out intercultural dialogue in everyday and professional spheres of communication. The learning outcome of the module 'Sustainable Development' will be the ability to find organizational and managerial decisions and to take responsibility for these decisions from the standpoint of their social significance. The module 'Diversity in the context of the university' is designed to train effective interaction in the university environment in regards to social and cultural diversity.

An initiative aimed at increasing the attractiveness and efficiency of virtual and real academic mobility is integrated into the implementation of the program. A consulting bureau will disseminate the academic mobility experience to potential participants of academic mobility and will consult on integration into the information and educational environment of a foreign university and a new academic culture. The implementation of the 'Campus International' program could increase the competitiveness and positive image of the regional university and give university teachers valuable innovative, technological, scientific, and educational experience, which is necessary for their active participation in the development and implementation of regional development programs.

7. Conclusion

The main trends in the continuing education of university teachers can be correlated with the global main directions of modernization of the education system, which include the continuity of education; research work of academic staff in the context of international cooperation; humanization of education; the large-scale implementation of practice-oriented teaching methods; design of meta-subject educational programs; development of andragogy and gerontology.

When improving the qualifications of teaching staff of universities, the emphasis should be on the formation and development of analytical, critical, design, and reflective skills. Implementation of competence-oriented educational programs, which are most consistent with distance and blended learning, virtual and real mobility of university teachers, including those based on the principles of bilingual education, has great potential in increasing the efficiency of professional development of university teachers.

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