



© 2023 Plotnikov. This article is distributed under the terms of CC Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International as described at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>

DOI: 10.31499/2306-5532.2.2023.299835

## TRAUMA INFORMED FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

**Yevhen Plotnikov**

*PhD in Education, Associate Professor,  
Nizhyn Mykola Gogol State University, Nizhyn, Ukraine,  
ORCID: 0000-0001-6010-247X; e-mail: [plotnikov@ndu.edu.ua](mailto:plotnikov@ndu.edu.ua)*

*The transformation of educational systems, which has become a prominent feature of our time, requires the use of sometimes unusual mechanisms for implementing daily educational practices. The problem of continuous professional development of school teachers is no exception. The professional development of a foreign language teacher is a complex, multidimensional process that usually aims to introduce qualitative changes in the general and professional competences of a specialist. Such development is conditioned not only by certain personal characteristics of a person, his/her intellectual level and professional experience, but also by the wider social and educational context.*

*Key words: non-formal, informal, foreign language teaching*

*Трансформація освітніх систем, яка стала помітною ознакою нашого часу, вимагає використання інколи незвичних механізмів реалізації щоденних освітніх практик. Не є винятком і проблема неперервного професійного розвитку шкільних учителів. Професійний розвиток вчителя іноземної мови - це складний, багатовимірний процес, який зазвичай спрямований на внесення якісних змін у загальні та професійні компетенції фахівця. Такий розвиток зумовлений не лише певними особистісними характеристиками людини, її інтелектуальним рівнем та професійним досвідом, але й ширшим соціальним та освітнім контекстом.*

*Ключові слова: неформальна, інформальна, навчання іноземних мов*

Usually, professional development of specialists takes place in several stages. At the initial stage, while studying under a specific professional programme at an educational institution, a person acquires basic professional knowledge and develops the necessary professional competences. Later on, at the workplace, these competences are improved through a wide range of formal, informal and non-formal learning



practices (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). This study focuses on the possibility of involving non-formal methods in the professional development of school foreign language teachers.

General principles and goals of non-formal and informal education at the international level are formulated and detailed in the working papers of a number of institutions, in particular UNESCO (Institute of Lifelong Learning, 2012), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2007) or the European Commission (Council of the European Union, 2012). All of them highlight the ever-growing role of such forms of training, taking into account the profound changes in the structure and needs of the labor market, as well as the requirements for the professional level of modern employees.

Unlike formal learning, which is usually conducted in specially organized and structured conditions and most often aims at obtaining a qualification, confirmed by a certain type of a certificate or diploma (Council of the European Union, 2012, p. 398/5 C) non-formal, and especially informal learning are deprived of most regulatory restrictions and thus are more flexible in the choice of teaching settings and methods.

Non-formal learning is defined as one that is outside the formal paradigm described above (Federighi, Menapace & Stanistreet, 2013). However, non-formal learning can take place both within and outside the institution (for example, corporate learning), must be carefully planned and able to provide educational support to the student (Council of the European Union, 2012). Traditionally, the main areas of non-formal education are professional development, development of civil and personal competencies, as well as training of people who can not be involved into formal training for various personal or social reasons.

Informal learning occurs as a result of everyday activities related to both work and leisure or family. Such training is not organized or structured in terms of goals, time, or support for training. Examples of informal learning can be competencies formed and / or developed as a result of life and work experience, such as learning foreign languages while staying in another country or skills in information and communication technologies acquired outside the work environment (Council of the European Union, 2012).

Methods. Content analysis of scientific research allows determining a number of key aspects of non-formal and informal foreign language teaching.

The practical implementation of the general principles of non-formal and informal learning at the national level is usually regulated by local legislation. For example, in Ukraine, it is the law "On Education" (2017) and other documents that recognize non-formal and informal education as full elements of the national educational system.

The implementation and acceptance of non-formal and informal learning is associated with a number of challenges. Thus, P. Werquin in the publication (Werquin, 2008), which reflects the official position of the Organization for economic cooperation and development, among other things, points out at the following problems:

- the need to actively involve a wider range of stakeholders than in formal educational settings, which may complicate internal quality assurance processes;



- the need for additional funding from sources that are not always stable and available;
- the complexity of selecting and applying reliable and valid assessment procedures, which leads to widespread skepticism about the importance of non-formal and informal learning, etc.

At the same time, positioning of non-formal and informal learning within national educational systems and determining the weight of their results can be quite a complex process. Taking this into account, the problem of recognizing and validating the results of non-formal and in-formal training is identified as one of the key issues for qualification systems and programmes (see, e.g., European, European Commission, 2018, p.156-214).

The solution to the above problem requires answering several questions, namely: Can non-formal and informal learning methods have a positive impact on the process of continuous professional development of school teachers? In what way should such teaching methods be involved in the process of in-service training of school teachers (including foreign language teachers)? In this context, it can be assumed that non-traditional forms of professional development in the context of partnership, which involves joint identification of problems, areas of activity, exchange of research results and is based on a dialogue between school teachers and other stakeholders in the educational process, allows changing their attitude to professional development and actualises individual motivation, interest in positive results and readiness for active action by all participants in the partnership.

Understanding the answers to the above questions requires the use of a wide range of research methods. One of the key ones at the initial stage is the method of analysing existing research. In our case, this method allowed us to find out, among other things, that the concept of non-formal education is usually presented in opposition to formal or institutionalised education (one that has a clearly defined progression and structure), and is also opposed to informal learning, which is focused on the activities of an individual rather than on organised educational interaction between a student and a teacher (Beaven & Alvarez, 2014).

To find out about the need for different methods of implementing CPD, we conducted a survey of school foreign language teachers. The survey covered 130 participants representing all regions of Ukraine, public and private institutions, and state education authorities. The respondents were asked to answer a number of questions about the existing professional development procedures, their readiness to introduce new forms of professional development and their general vision of the possibilities of implementing such forms.

Another important issue for non-formal and informal educational systems is the quality of teaching. It is quite obvious to assume that the quality of teacher training has a positive impact on the learning process. However, the “quality of training” is not always an unambiguous and generally accepted term. Thus, the report of the Organization for Economic co-operation and Development (OECD) (McKenzie & Santiago, 2005) notes that the concept of teacher training quality is quite controversial, especially if you look at how this aspect of professional training is measured in different countries. Based on the analysis of existing research, the report suggests at



least three key areas of understanding of the “quality of training” concept, namely: 1) the quality of a teachers’ training is a central factor affecting the success of their students; 2) the quality of training is quite variable, especially at the intra-school level (as opposed to situation at the level of educational institutions); 3) the quality of teacher training should be achieved through professional development, in order to improve the effectiveness of student learning.

A high level of readiness to choose the forms of their own professional development (scores of 8-9-10) was reported by 36% of respondents, 46% of respondents consider themselves rather ready than not ready (scores of 5-6-7), 18% of respondents (scores of 2-3-4) reported low readiness of teachers to choose the forms of professional development independently. The distribution of answers by age groups of respondents is presented in the diagrams.

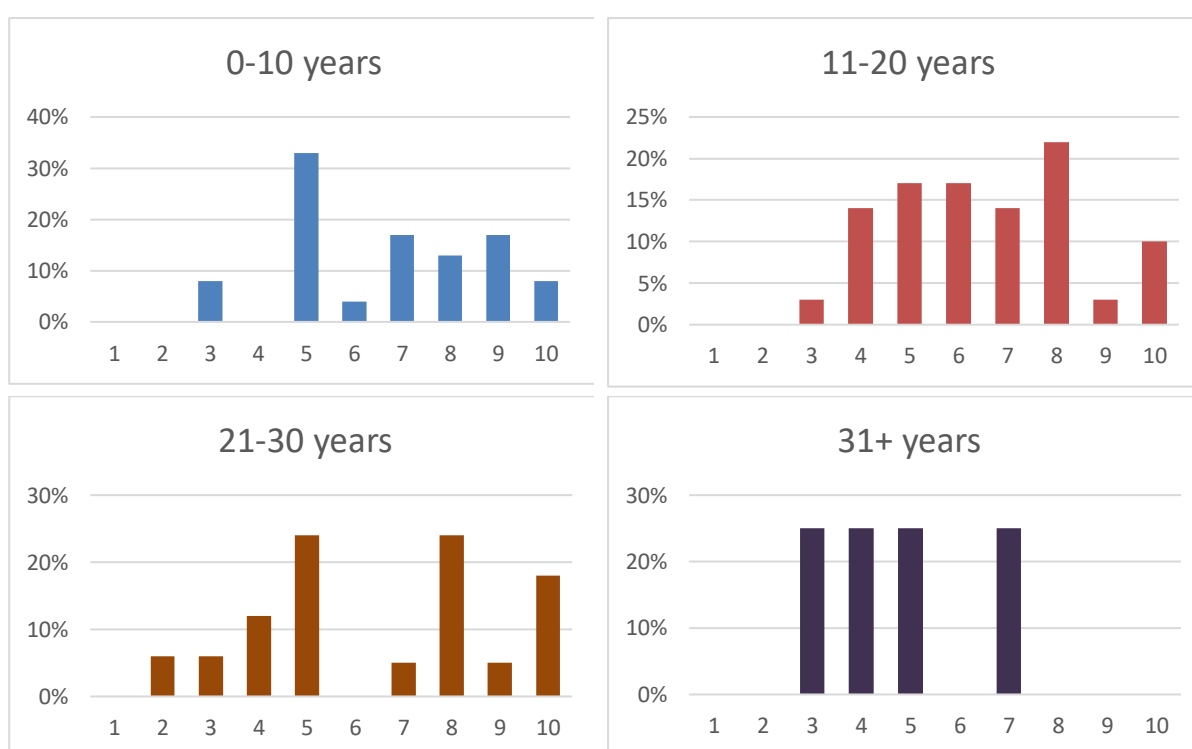


Fig. Readiness of teachers to implement the choice of forms of professional development

These and other survey results indicate that a significant number of school teachers demonstrate their readiness for qualitative changes in professional development, their desire to overcome isolation and formalism in designing the content of professional training, to introduce interactive forms of work, etc.

Conclusions. Non-formal and informal education can acquire different, sometimes unexpected forms, often due to weak or missing regulation. The implementation process always depend upon a number of inner and outer factors that, on the one hand, make non-formal and informal training similar with the formal one, and on the other hand, provide a vast array of promising opportunities for learners.



---

---

### References:

- Council of the European Union (2012). Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning, O.J. 2012/C 398/01. *Official Journal of the European Union*, pp. C 398/1-C 398/5. Отримано з <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:398:0001:0005:EN:PDF>.
- European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice (2018). *The European Higher Education Area in 2018: Bologna Process Implementation Report*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Federighi, P., Menapace, M. & Stanistreet, P. (2013). *Adult and continuing education in Europe: Using public policy to secure a growth in skills*. Brussels: European Commission.
- Institute of Lifelong Learning [UIL] (2012). *Guidelines for the Recognition, Validation and Accreditation of the Outcomes of Non-formal and Informal Learning*. Hamburg, Germany, UIL.
- McKenzie P. & Santiago, P. (2005). *Teachers matter: attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers*. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] (2007). *Propositions for a typology of recognition systems*. Vienna, Austria: Directorate for Education. Education Policy Committee.
- Werquin, P. (2008). Recognition of non-formal and informal learning in OECD countries: A very good idea in jeopardy? *Lifelong Learning in Europe*, 3, pp.142-149. Отримано з <http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/41851819.pdf>.
- Zakon Ukrainy "Pro Osvitu" [Law of Ukraine "On Education"] № 2145-VIII (2017)

Received: October, 9  
Accepted: December, 1