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*Comparative Education in Ukraine under Globalisation:  
Achievements and Challenges*

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Ukraińska pedagogika porównawcza w ramach globalizacji: Osiągnięcia i wyzwania

## ABSTRACT

In Ukraine, a number of factors including the “iron curtain” disappearance, the independence proclamation in 1991, rapid ICT expansion promoted the national education openness for the worldwide achievements and actualized the comparative education role. In the independence period, an important task for the comparative education in Ukraine is to study the nature of the educational transformations in the developed countries in order to harmonize the national education development with the educational achievements of Europe and the USA. The purpose of the article is to conduct a comparative analysis of the comparative education development in Ukraine and abroad, to outline the achievements and the challenges faced by the national comparative education nowadays.

As a result of the analysis it was concluded that in Ukraine the nature of comparative education development has its own specificity caused by the prolonged isolation and ideological pressure in the Soviet period.

The abovementioned issues make it impossible to find the direct parallels between the developments of comparative education in foreign countries and in Ukraine until 1991. At the same time, it was concluded that after Ukraine’s independence, comparative education started to be developed as an academic field similar to the foreign comparative education methodological approaches.

So far “preparatory period” had lasted when the foundations of this science were laid, and the methods of comparison were developed. It should be notified that this period was varying; every decade has enriched the science of comparing with many ideas and technologies. The less was the influence of the communist ideology, the fruitfully the methodological ideas and technologies were developing.

The present stage (which is determined by globalization transformations) could be characterized as the period of the national comparative education professionalization. The professionaliza-

tion is characterized both by the comparative education institutionalization (institutional structure formation) and the development of its methodology. The institutionalization comprises the comparative education research centres formation; launching the “Comparative pedagogy” course for the future teachers in the Ukrainian universities; the specialized journals publication; conducting the annual special events.

The comparative education methodology is also under the process of development. The issues that remain to be open for the Ukrainian comparative educationists’ community in the aspect of the methodology primarily cover the selection of the methods for the comparative educational studies, meeting the national education requirements in terms of the determination of the common trends and patterns of the educational development abroad and primarily in Europe, the prognostication for the educational policymakers in Ukraine.

**Key words:** comparative education; Ukraine; globalization

## INTRODUCTION

Globalization as a homogenizing tendency of the modern world has a considerable impact on education that creates a common educational space through the interpenetration of ideas/theories/forms/methods. In Ukraine, a number of factors including the disappearance of the “iron curtain”, the independence proclamation in 1991, the rapid ICT expansion contributed to the openness of national education to the worldwide achievements and actualized the comparative education (CE) role. In the Soviet period, the key objective of the CE was criticism of the so-called “bourgeois” pedagogy and education. The abovementioned methodological approach did not contribute to the efficient development of this field of science. In the independence time, the CE task has been changed. Now CE is aimed at studying the nature of the educational phenomena abroad in the process of their rapid transformations in order to synchronize the Ukrainian education system development with those in the developed countries. It requires applying the methodology developed by the combined efforts of the world leading comparative educationists, G.Z.F. Bereday, M. Bray, M.A. Eckstein, I. Kandel, H. Hoah, and many others. The purpose of the article is to conduct a comparative analysis of the CE as a field of development in Ukraine and abroad, to outline the achievements and the challenges faced by the national CE nowadays.

In Ukraine many comparative educationists dedicate their studies to various aspects of foreign pedagogy and education. These are the works of: N. Avshenyuk, T. Bodnarchuk A. Dzhurylo, L. Zablotska, O. Zabolotna, H. Yehorov, K. Korsak, N. Lavrychenko, M. Leshchenko, O. Maksymenko, I. Mariutz, O. Milyutina, O. Matvienko, N. Mukan, O. Ovcharuk, O. Ohiyenko, O. Permyakova, M. Tadeyeva, N. Fedschyshyn, Zh. Chernyakova, I. Chystyakova, N. Sheverun, I. Shymkiv, O. Shparyk, etc.

The methodological fundamentals of CE and its genesis as an academic field are studied by A. Vasylyuk, M. Chepil, L. Pukhovka, A. Sbruieva, S. Sokolova, S. Sysoeva, H. Shchuka, S. Tsyura, etc.

Abroad, the development of the theory and the practice of CE is ensured by the powerful community of CE scholars from many countries including C. Al-laf, M. Bray, R. Cowen, H. van Dael, M.A. Eckstein, P.R. Fossum, B. Johnstone, B. Adamson, A. Kazamias, P.K. Kubow, M. Mason, M. Manzon, W. Mitter, H.J. Noah, A. Nóvoa, N. Popov, V.D. Rust, Ch. Wolhuter, K. Schwartz and others.

The CE studies of the abovementioned and other scholars represent the CE genesis in the format of stages/phases/periods classification of this process. For instance, Bereday in his work *Comparative Method in Education* (1964), proposed three periods of CE development, i.e. *period of borrowing* (19<sup>th</sup> century); *period of prediction* (the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century); *period of analyses* (1950–1970s).

The first period is associated with the name of M.A. Jullien de Paris who published his work *Esquisse et Vues Préliminaires d'un Ouvrage sur l'Éducation Comparée* in 1817. The scholar proposed to collect the descriptive data for selecting the best practices of one country for the use in another one.

The second period is considered by Bereday from the position of the necessity to take into consideration the context while undertaking the comparative research. M. Sadler, F. Schneider, F. Hilder, I. Kandel, R. Ulich, N. Hans, and P. Rosello have emphasized the fact that the education system development is determined by the social and economic factors and their consideration is very important for the successful foreign expertise borrowing.

The third period is defined by Bereday as the period of the formation of the CE methodology comprising the development of the methodological algorithm and tools for comparison. According to Bereday, the launch of the systematic view of the education sector in order to obtain the valid panorama of the educational phenomenon was a real CE methodology innovation.

Special mention in this article should go the classifications describing the CE development under globalisation. In particular, these include A. Nóvoa's and T. Yariv-Mashal's classification comprising four periods, i.e. *Knowing the "other"* (1880s); *Understanding the "other"* (1920s); *Constructing the "other"* (1960s); *Measuring the "other"* (2000s). The first period is regarded as a period of the cognition of education in other countries; the second one (after World War I) is characterized as a period of a need to understand the approaches of other countries to education for creating a "new" world and upbringing a "new individual"; the third one, the so-called "post-colonial period", is marked by the design of the educational systems in the developing world, the time when education was assigned to the source of the social and economic progress; the fourth period is peculiar for the creation of the international instruments to measure the efficiency and the

quality of the national education systems to compare (Nóvoa and Yariv-Mashal 2003, pp. 423–439).

Manzon in her work *Comparative Education: The Construction of a Field* (2011) has suggested four periods of the comparative studies development, i.e. *Early establishments* (1900–1945); *Expansion and specialization* (1945–1970); *Fragmentation* (1970–2000); *Integration and new developments* (2000s). She grounds the first two periods on the classifications of M. Epstein (1994) and M. Bray (2001).

Popov (Wolhuter et al. 2013) suggested the following five periods: *Early years phase* (1900s–1910s); *Classic years phase* (1920s–1930s); *Expansion phase* (1950s–mid-1970s); *Varied trends phase* (mid-1970s–1990s); *New developments phase* (2000s).

The conducted analysis of the abovementioned and the other classifications makes it possible to state that despite the difference in the periods' names, the scholars are unanimous about the basic milestones in the CE development. We include the following ones among them:

- 1817, when Jullien de Paris in the work *Esquisse et Vues Préliminaires d'un Ouvrage sur l'Éducation Comparée*, proposed the first methodological guidance (purpose, object, functions and methods of the CE research, the basic unit of the comparative analysis – the national education system) of the comparison in order to find the best practices of one country that can be copied by another one;
- the period of the Sadler's activity. In his work *How far can we learn anything of practical value from the study of foreign systems of education?* (1900), Sadler suggested the two key postulates of the CE: a) education is inextricably connected with the society. Therefore, comparative analysis of an educational phenomena should be conducted taking into consideration the social factors background; b) the practical benefits of comparative studies on educational systems is the opportunity to better understand our own education system (Vasylyuk et al. 2002, p. 13);
- the introduction by Noah, Eckstein, Kazamias and others of the scientific method with its predictive function, accurate research technology, careful empirical testing hypotheses, valid gauges in the research in the late 1950s (Mattheou 2009, pp. 59–68);
- the 1970s when structural functionalism greatly influenced the evolution of global comparative methodological foundations. The CE started to be positioned as a tool not only to modernize the education system, but also the society in general (Rust et al. 2009, pp. 121–135);
- in the 1990s, the enrichment of the CE theory by the ideas of human capital took place. The traditional field of CE expanded by means of “market” topics like “efficiency of public education”, “private schools”, “education

founding”, “efficiency of the invested resources”, “educational management”, etc.

The nature of the CE methodological developments under globalization in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is of our special attention. Global transformations cause the necessity to study, apart from the horizontal (national) features, vertical (supranational) ones in order to find out the common development trends. “Globalisation demands a new geopolitical cartography that creates new streams of global effects and examples of imitation, domination and subordination in the educational policy and practice”, said Bray, reflecting on the tasks of the CE in the New Millennium (Bray 2003, pp. 209–224).

In Ukraine, the nature of the CE development has its own specificity caused by the prolonged isolation and ideological pressure during the Soviet time. However, the level of the pressure was different in different times of the Soviet state existence. The Stalinist-totalitarian education reforms in the 30s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were aimed at the ideologisation and unification of the education system in the USSR. The reforms negatively affected the CE field, i.e. an objective study of foreign experience was replaced by its crushing criticism, and the CE ideas of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were regarded as false, ideologically and socially hostile.

After World War II, in times of the so-called “Khrushchev Thaw”, easing of ideological pressing and revitalization of interest both to the foreign experience and to the CE were in evidence in the USSR. A *Modern School and Pedagogy Abroad* subdivision was opened in the Institute of Theory and History of Pedagogy of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the USSR (Moscow) in 1957; *Comparative Education* laboratory was opened in the Moscow State Pedagogical Institute in 1966; the textbook for students of pedagogical institutes – *Comparative Education* by M. Sokolova, E. Kuz'mina, M. Rodionov – was published in 1978. It is evident that the publication of the *Comparative Education* textbook – the first and the singular the CE textbook in the USSR – is a great achievement of the time. For the first time in the USSR the authors submitted the holistic methodology of the CE presenting its aim, tasks, methods of research, key stages of its development through lens of input of the world-famous comparative educationists – Jullien de Paris, I. Kandel, P. Monroe, F. Schneider, P. Rosselló, N. Hans. In spite of constant contraposition of pedagogy and education in the socialist and capitalist countries knowledge on education reforms abroad, organization of education systems and curricula structuring was conveyed to the future Soviet pedagogues.

In the Soviet Ukraine, a similar analytical unit (first sector, then laboratory) was opened in 1971 at the Ukrainian Research Institute of Education (later – the Institute of Pedagogy of the National Academy of Educational Sciences (NAES) of Ukraine). The name of the laboratory – Scientific and Education Information

lab – met its goal, i.e. to inform educators about education in foreign countries through the prism of “bourgeois” pedagogy criticism.

It should be noted that even under the ideological pressure the existence of such a unit was significantly positive for the Ukrainian pedagogical theory and education. That period scholars’ names should be called – N. Abashkina, E. Berzhna, L. Bulai, G. Egorov, B. Melnychenko (who was the unchanged head of the SEI lab until its transformation into a Comparative Education lab in 1991), G. Stepenko I. Taranenko, T. Todorov – whose studies on the education abroad were in great demand among the pedagogical community.

Among numerous publications issued at that time special mention should go to a series of *Foreign Education Chronicle* (in the form of digest on topical information about foreign countries education reforms and best practices), a series *Worldwide Outstanding Educators* (the Ukrainian readers were made aware of P. Freire’s, C. Freinet’s, M. Montessori’s, R. Steiner’s, and other educators’ pedagogical views that were little-known or unknown in the USSR and well-known abroad), *Concise Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Foreign Education Terms*.

The edition *System of Public Education in Foreign Countries at Present: The Socialist, Capitalist and Developing Countries* (1990) became a “bestseller” because at that time, under conditions of the absence of the Internet and few contacts with foreign colleagues, information about education in foreign countries was very difficult to get for the Soviet scholars.

We consider the year of 1991 as the starting point of the formation of the Ukrainian CE as an academic field. It was time when the mentioned Scientific and Education Information lab was renamed into a new unit, i.e. the Comparative Education lab headed by I. Taranenko. The abovementioned event was caused by the necessity of the new country to study foreign expertise scientifically. Along with the CE lab under the NAES, numerous CE centres appeared gradually in many regions of Ukraine; the course “Comparative Education” began to be taught at the universities. The abovementioned issues appeared to be possible due to globalization and the ICT expansion; it extended boundaries, contributed to the interpenetration of the ideas and the best practices dissemination. They also ensured the CE development Ukraine as a full-featured field of education science under the influence of the CE abroad.

Actually, (in accordance with E. Epstein) the process of the national CE professionalization – its transformation into a separate field of the education science (with its own object, subject, goal, objectives, conceptual framework, a set of methods) that is based on the developed infrastructure – was held (Lokshyna 2014). At present, the CE achievements in Ukraine are the following:

- *CE research centres functioning*. Thus, under the NAES of Ukraine besides the first in Ukraine Department of the CE at the Institute of Education there are similar units in other research institutions today. These

- are: the Department of Teachers' Foreign Training and Adult Education at the Institute of Teachers' Training and Adult Education of the NAES of Ukraine, the Department of Comparative Studies of Information and Education Innovations at the Institute of Informational Technologies and Resources of the NAES of Ukraine, and Laboratory for Foreign VET Systems at the Institute of Vocational Education and Training of the NAES of Ukraine. The number of departments/centres at the universities whose name includes the term *comparative education* include the Department for History of Education and Comparative Education at the Hryhoriy Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University as well as such centres as The Educational Comparative Studies Laboratory at the Pavlo Tychyna Uman' State Pedagogical University, The Centre for Comparative Professional Education at the Khmelnytskyi National University, The Centre of Comparative Educational Research at the Mykola Hogol Nizhyn State University. These centres are the catalysts of the CE methodology development; on their basis a network of the leading experts in CE is formed;
- *teaching the "Comparative Education" course* for bachelors/masters relating to the category of optional ones. Under the curricula variability, the common topics of all these are the "Comparative Education as a Field of Educational Science and an Educational Discipline" and "History of Comparative Education". The vast majority of curricula include (depending on the area of training) topics on the reforming/development trends of pre-school, school and higher education in foreign countries, the analysis of educational systems of leading foreign countries, the socialization of an individual in the context of globalization, the alternative pedagogy and training, etc.;
  - *publication* of the specialized journals "Comparative Education Studies" (<http://journals.uran.ua/index.php/2306-5532>) and the "Comparative Professional Education" (<http://khnu.km.ua/angl/j/default.htm>), which serve as a presentation platform for the lay-outs of the Ukrainian comparative educationists, a tool for the communication with the foreign colleagues;
  - *holding the annual special events* (in particular, the Ukrainian theory and practical seminar "Pedagogical Comparatistics"), which are aimed at exchanging ideas, discussing challenges, developing common views, and communicating face-to-face. Such events are important and effective means to develop the comparative educationists' community.

Considering the nature of the Ukrainian CE methodological transformations it is necessary to emphasize their dynamism. The criticism of the "bourgeois" education was replaced by its objective analysis; linear research of the early 90s reached the multidimensionality level in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In particular:

- the range of the countries for research is expanding. Before the 2000s, the educational phenomena in the USA's and UK's research dominated; sometimes Germany and France were countries for the CE research. Today national CE scholars actively explore the region of the Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Hungary), the post-Soviet Union countries, namely Georgia, Armenia, Estonia, Lithuania. The educational achievements of Australia, Belgium, Cyprus, Italy, Finland, Holland, Korea, Mexico, Norway and many other countries are of special interest as well;
- the interstate/regional comparison is conducted, for instance at the level of the European Union, Scandinavian countries, the Black Sea region, etc.;
- the supranational character phenomena are studied, i.e. the European Strategy for the Eastern Partnership; Bologna process; international comparative studies on the students' achievements (TIMSS, PISA); the European space of higher education, international educational information networks; academic mobility, etc.;
- an appeal to the professional legacy of the prominent foreign scholars and pedagogues unknown in Ukraine before intensified. The works of T. Gordon, M. Knowles and others are studied;
- the mandatory involvement of the time comparison element to enhance the geographic one is considered as an achievement. It is the analysis of the historical traces of the problem. This is correlated with the ideas of the A. Sweeting who has noted in *Doing Comparative Historical Education Research: problems and issues from and about Hong Kong* (2001) that the attempts to limit the comparative studies to a comparison across places with little or no attention paid to time, are likely to create a thin, flat, quite possible superficial outcome. Efforts to enable comparison to encompass time, as well as place, however, are likely to enhance the profundity of the study.

It is evident that the CE development in Ukraine meets the challenges comprising among others the following:

- a) the CE in Ukraine is considered as a theoretical field of educational science; correspondingly, the theoretical methods of research are dominated. Meanwhile, foreign scholars use a wide range of research methods including empirical ones;
- b) the format of the comparison is still underdeveloped, namely an issue of the foreign experience comparison with the Ukrainian one;
- c) the practice exists to choose the PhD thesis topic on the basis of the availability of foreign sources/literature/information rather than of the national education needs;



- d) what should be the results/outcomes of the CE study in order to bring a benefit to the national education? What is the best format of these results presentation to be used by the policy developers?

These and other questions form the wide scope for the further research.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Modernization of the national education, along with its entry into the European and world educational space actualizes foreign education expertise as well as the CE in Ukraine intensifying the dynamic development of its methodological bases and infrastructure. Openness to the world under globalization enables the correlation of the national CE methodological vector with the CE postulates abroad.

Except for the achievements, the development is accompanied by the challenges of both the methodological and organizational nature. The methodological character issues that remain polemical to the CE community in Ukraine comprise among others the selection of methods for research; the CE delivery in relation to the national education demands in terms of its correlation with the world education trends/patterns of development; forecast for educational policy makers in Ukraine.

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## STRESZCZENIE

Wiele czynników, obejmujących zniknięcie „żelaznej kurtyny” i ogłoszenie niepodległości w 1991 r., oraz szybkie rozprzestrzenianie się ICT na Ukrainie spowodowało otwartość edukacji krajowej na światowe osiągnięcia w tej dziedzinie, co podniosło także rolę pedagogiki porównawczej. W czasach niepodległości ważnym zadaniem jest badanie istoty transformacji edukacyjnych za granicą w celu harmonizowania edukacji narodowej zgodnie z kierunkami rozwoju systemów edukacji w Europie i USA. Celem artykułu jest analiza rozwoju pedagogiki porównawczej na Ukrainie z uwzględnieniem dokonań innych krajów oraz określenie osiągnięć i wyzwań stojących przed krajową pedagogiką porównawczą na współczesnym etapie. Stwierdzono, że na Ukrainie specyficzny charakter rozwoju pedagogiki porównawczej spowodowany jest przez długotrwałą izolację i specyficzne wpływy ideologiczne, jakim podlegała Ukraina w latach podległości Związkowi Radzieckiemu.

Specyfika ta uniemożliwiła przeprowadzenie bezpośrednich paraleli między rozwojem pedagogiki porównawczej za granicą i na Ukrainie do 1991 r., kiedy po uzyskaniu niepodległości ukraińska pedagogika porównawcza zaczęła się rozwijać podobnie, jak to ma miejsce w innych krajach. Jak dotąd trwał w tej dziedzinie „okres przygotowawczy”, podczas którego opracowywano podstawy tej nauki wraz z metodologią badawczą. Należy zauważyć, że okres ten nie był jednolity – kolejne dziesięciolecia wzbogacały tę dziedzinę nauki o rozliczne innowacje i nowoczesne technologie.

Obecny etap (zdeteminowany przez transformacje globalizacyjne) może być scharakteryzowany jako okres profesjonalizacji narodowej pedagogiki porównawczej w kontekście tworzenia jej ośrodków badawczych, wprowadzenia kursu „Pedagogika porównawcza” dla przyszłych nauczycieli na uniwersytetach w kraju, wydawania czasopism specjalistycznych, przeprowadzania corocznych przedsięwzięć warsztatowych wraz z nieustannym tworzeniem metodologii pedagogiki porównawczej.

Pytania, które pozostają otwarte dla społeczności ukraińskich komparatystów, przede wszystkim obejmują dobór odpowiednich metod do przeprowadzania badań porównawczo-pedagogicznych, ich skuteczności, zgodności z wymogami edukacji narodowej w zakresie wyodrębnienia wspólnych z systemami edukacyjnymi innych krajów tendencji rozwojowych, reguł i zasad prognozy dla twórców polityki edukacyjnej na Ukrainie.

**Słowa kluczowe:** pedagogika porównawcza; Ukraina; globalizacja