

**Evaluation of PRESETT Ukraine:**

***New Generation School Teacher* Project**

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# Glossary & Abbreviations

21CS Twenty first century skills

CEFR Common European Framework of Reference

CLIL Content Language Integrated Learning

CPD Continuing Professional Development

EAP English for Academic Purposes

EFL English as a Foreign Language

EMC Experimental Methodology Course

EMI English Medium Instruction

ESP English for Specific Purposes

HEI Higher Education Institutions

INSETT In-Service Teacher Training

MA Masters

MoES Ministry of Education and Science Ukraine

PRESETT Pre-Service Teacher Training

SEN Special Educational Needs

TMC Traditional Methodology Course

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

# Executive Summary

Having visited four different pedagogical universities, observed methodology teachers teaching methodology classes, student teachers microteaching language classes, conducted focus group discussions with students from both traditional and experimental methodology courses, methodology course teachers, school mentor teachers and interviews with university rectors, we have concluded that:

Although there were differences in the content balance in different universities, as befits an experimental course, delivery of the methodology course across all four universities was totally consistent. Sessions were delivered to a high skill level, were carefully planned and the courses showed extensive higher-level organisation. University lecturers spoke only in English, were respectful, dealt with issues in a tactful manner, elicited extensively and provided a dynamic, interactive learning environment.

Student teachers responded very positively to the methodology sessions by interacting enthusiastically, volunteering without hesitations and contributing to the sessions with deep and innovative responses.

There was a clear difference in language ability between traditional (B2) and experimental (solid C1) methodology students.

When asked which course, they would prefer to take, the traditional methodology students chose the experimental course, as did the experimental course students. The experimental course students, when asked what they would change about the course, had difficulty answering, one or two calling it 'perfect'. When pushed, some suggested 'more teaching practice'.

Rectors are extremely proud of these courses. They are promoting the spread of the new approach to methodology across other languages and further, towards all subject areas. They are also happy to promote the courses to other university rectors. One of the recommendations from this evaluation is to use the experience of this course to inform a national framework curriculum that informs all future training of teachers. Not just English language teachers

The experimental course and the project team delivering it can be very proud to have enabled the development of a cadre of novice teachers who are very well prepared to enter schools as highly competent classroom teachers. They have 'no fear' according to one deputy head teacher who notes that these student teachers are 'the best teachers we have ever produced'. We were very impressed by their levels of professionalism and the depth to which they can analyse and discuss their own teaching and the teaching they observe. They have been very well acculturated into the profession.

## Key Recommendations

1. **Officially approve the Experimental Methodology Course (EMC) and recommend national implementation.**

* Fund translation of the core transferable teaching skills information into Ukrainian to enable training of teachers of other subjects in the experimental methodology.
* Fund and support a working group of teachers tasked with developing a MA level course based on similar principles. Already defined as potential MA level course topics are courses with a focus on:
* Specific age groups: adults, teens, young learners
* Levels of content integration: ESP, CLIL, EAP, EMI
* Specific areas of methodology: assessment, materials design, developing learner autonomy, SEN
* All based on a foundation of action research

1. **More clearly define standards for teaching:**

* Define starting level English language teacher competence standards based on novice teacher performance according to the stated course outcomes.
* Produce a development framework that defines levels of teacher development and professional achievement.

1. **Develop School Networks**

* Support formation of an online ‘Pedagogical University Development Network’: Agenda setting, idea and materials sharing, collaboration on research and development projects.
* Support adoption of partner schools which are mentored in the development process of moving from traditional to modern methodologies.

1. **Strengthen INSETT provision:**

* Recommend EMC content in INSETT Institute training.
* Promote active collaboration of pedagogical universities and INSETT Institutes.

# Background

As in many other European countries, Ukraine’s increased interaction with other European countries and the wider world has increased the need for higher standards of English among the country’s citizens. Trade, travel, education and international relations can only improve if standards of English teaching are raised at every level of the education system. The pre-existing teaching-learning traditions have an emphasis on knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, rote memorisation, and little, or no use of English as an active communication tool or life skill. Underpinned by academic traditions of philology at university these approaches do not support the practical use of English, but rather English as a subject of academic analysis.

Standards for Secondary Education were embedded in the Law on Secondary Education, adopted in 2015. State Standards for Primary were introduced in 2018. State Standards for Secondary are currently under review. The new standards required the implementation of a new language curriculum informed by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages with set desirable exit levels of English for school leavers and university graduates. However, there was a gap between the desire to implement these and the standards of English teaching in schools and universities. A change in the teacher preparation curricula, assessment, content and procedures in pre-service teacher training (PRESETT) was required.

To support the needs of pedagogical institutions to better prepare student teachers entering the primary and secondary school system and help learners build appropriate levels of language proficiency for modern employment and social interaction needs, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (MoES), jointly with the British Council Ukraine, initiated and launched the PRESETT project in March 2013.

More than forty autonomous institutions prepare English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in Ukraine. They offer diplomas in EFL philology and teaching at Bachelor, and Master levels determined by the national system of standards, as stated in the Law on Higher Education (2002). Of these, seventeen have been involved in the PRESETT programme: the ten original members with seven more joining in 2016, two more have expressed an interest in developing similar programmes and materials have been made available to them.

According to the baseline study (2013-14) conducted by a team of researchers from national and pedagogic universities, there were no national professional standards for English teachers, (in fact they are still in the process of development) and there were no approved national educational EFL teacher standards. There was also no approved EFL teacher training curriculum, and implementation of any curriculum was ad hoc. The curriculum adopted by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) was informed by the Soviet period curriculum and was thus very out-of-date. Some EFL lecturers relied only on materials and references physically available at their departments, which was extremely limiting; Some EFL lecturers were engaged in developing their own syllabi, to meet the needs of their students, but there was little cross-institutional communication on this.

Twelve syllabi from universities participating in the baseline survey were analysed. The conclusion was that none of them could be regarded as a potential unified national EFL teacher training curriculum. The methodology of teaching a foreign language was seen as particularly lacking.

The main objectives of the desired development project, later to be called PRESETT were to set up:

* approved national EFL teacher training standards;
* a unified national curriculum, which takes into consideration national and international education priorities;
* syllabi for methodology of EFL teaching which should become a key subject at Bachelor and Master levels of ELT teacher training.

The recommendations arising from the baseline study are detailed in Table 1 along with the salient PRESETT project features addressing each one.

**Table 1: Synergy between Baseline Recommendations and PRESETT**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Baseline Recommendation** | **PRESETT Response** |
| Providing priority of methodological training for pre-service FL teachers in university curricula | Targeting of the English as a Foreign Language Methodology course as an area of reform. This leads teaching methodology reform as the first subject to undergo such a transformation. |
| Increasing the proportion of the methodological strand in the system of pre-service FL teacher education and training in accordance with the challenges of the time, in particular, increasing the number of contact hours for the discipline “Methods of Foreign Language teaching in Secondary Schools” and their redistribution in favour of practical and laboratory classes | Time allocation for the methodology course was at least more than quadrupled from 150 to 660 hours study in all but one of the participating universities. That institution doubled the time allocation.  The bulk of the additional hours was given over to experience in host secondary schools with mentor teachers. |
| Core curriculum design in ELT Methodology which is to consider the national and international educational priorities | Content in the EMC carefully considered the national priorities regarding international communication and intercultural skills, Council of Europe recommendations on curricula of the future and CEFR levels and 21CS. Even though the project team was separate from the New Ukrainian School reform, their pedagogic content is closely aligned. |
| Unification of requirements for teaching practice (content, structure, organization, duration, assessment) and strengthening its methodological component | Guidelines were produced describing desired methodologies, teaching practices and approaches, processes and resources. Materials were shared among development teams. |
| Using English as the language of instruction in the ELT Methodology course | English was to be the only language used in EMC. |
| Introduction of effective forms of methodological training for pre-service FL teachers, for instance, interactive lectures, multimedia presentations and other learning technologies, methodological workshops, student research projects, peer teaching, etc. | In the guidelines produced, the specific methodologies recommended were interactive. Sample materials produced used multimedia sources and integrated technology where appropriate. Students were tasked with conducting a research project in their final year, with the idea of classroom research introduced much earlier in the third year. All students were tasked with regularly conducting micro-teaching with peer groups. |
| A reasonable balance of theory and practice, knowledge and skills; unification of knowledge and skills descriptors in the syllabi of all the HEI that train FL teachers | The documentation for EMC was extensive and included extensive competency-based syllabi with associated skill and knowledge descriptors. These were accompanied by assessment tasks initially and then built into learning plans according to a backward design methodology. |
| Providing unified approaches to the assessment of students’ academic achievements in the discipline “Methods of Foreign Language Teaching in Secondary Schools”, namely: the number of types and forms of assessment, assessment criteria, the content and scope of items for summative assessment | Assessment was considered a driver for EMC. From a backward design perspective, assessments were set and learning plans devised to enable learners to achieve good results on them.  Every assessment task was accompanied by a grading rubric. Multiple forms were used including self-assessment, formative and summative assessments |
| Changing priorities in the objects of assessment from theoretical knowledge to practical teaching skills of pre-service FL teachers | All assessments dealt with writing about the practical application of knowledge to a problem including an open book exam based on a series of academic prompts. Demonstration of the knowledge and skills was also required through a series of performance tasks such as presentations and micro-teaching. |

The Experimental Methodology Course (EMC) was planned in alignment with these objectives and was launched in 2016 with an initial cohort of 470 students across ten Pedagogical Universities. In 2018-19, that has naturally grown to 1283 students, with the first cohort graduating this year or a 2.7-times increase in the number of students taking part in the course.

Although three of the original universities dropped out of the project at an early stage, others have been keen to join. Seven joined in 2016. One of which was the university we visited in Kyiv. Currently three other universities are interested in starting up EMC programmes.

The growth in the number of universities and the natural build up year on year of new students entering the programme has also increased the number of schools and school teachers involved in mentoring since 2017. This has increased from 188 to 344 or 1.8 times.

Project activities:

* Baseline Study
* Development of
* EFL teacher profile
* EFL Methodology Curriculum
* Curriculum Guidelines
* Sample materials
* Supplementary materials for university teachers, students and school mentors
* Professional development for university teachers and school mentors

In 2016 the first intake of student teachers on the EMC coincided with the publishing of the concept of the New Ukrainian School. This visionary publication described the direction that Ukraine wants to move in regarding updating secondary education and equipping learners for the 21st Century (Gryshchenko, M. (Ed.) (2016). New Ukrainian School: Conceptual principles of secondary school reform. Kyiv: Ministry of Education and Sport, Ukraine). The content of this series of recommendations is very much in alignment with the revised methodology course and informs the recommendations that arise from this report.

# Aims of the Evaluation Study

This study examines the degree to which the stated project outcomes have been achieved. This report is based on a desk review of project documentation and examination of information gathered during the two-week on-the-ground visit to four pedagogical universities throughout Ukraine: Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University, Karkhiv, Pavlo Tychyna State Pedagogical University, Uman and Vinnytsia State Pedagogical University.

## Evaluation Areas

Considering the main stakeholders within PRESETT: lecturers, trainee teachers, school teacher supervisors and rectors/ deans, we explored the following key points:

* What has changed, why and how? Including: attitudes and beliefs, teaching and training practice, and key performance indicators (where possible)
* The degree to which the participating universities: have implemented the experimental methodology curriculum; are happy with it; want to change it.
* In terms of the project implementation team at each university: What forms and level of support was provided for the project implementation team? What results did they achieve?; the reasons for those results, key success factors enabling outcome achievement, and plans for future development.

## Investigation Methods

The investigation took the form of:

* Individual interviews with each university rector and the project implementation team lead.
* Observation of at least one methodology session per institution delivered by a lecturer.
* Focus group interviews with:
  + Lecturers involved in delivering the EMC
  + Lecturers yet to deliver the course
  + Trainee teachers in final years on the EMC
  + Trainee teachers on the traditional methodology course (TMC)
  + School teachers tasked with supervising the trainee teachers during school placements.
* Online surveys were conducted in advance of the visits with each stakeholder group were conducted in order to inform the content of the interviews.

# Results

All four of these institutions can be said to have successfully implemented EMC, though in slightly different ways according to their contexts. Overall the project has had an 82% institutional success rate, i.e. only three out of the seventeen participating universities have not succeeded in implementing or have decided not to implement EMC. One institution: Khmelnitsky Humanitarian Pedagogical Academy has implemented EMC with roughly half the number of academic hours of any other school. It would be useful to discover if the quality of their results differs in any significant way from the others, who have all chosen to implement the 660-hour version of the curriculum.

Both of these versions of EMC are a vast increase on the original 90-150-hour teacher preparation courses, but it would be worthwhile studying the efficiency of the use of the 660 hours.

Discussions with student teachers suggested that they would like more practice, but also that they felt they could participate more actively, earlier in their observed teaching practice. When students ask for more practice, this does not necessarily mean more hours, but better use of the hours they have already been assigned.

## Overview of the Evaluation Results against Project Goals

In terms of progress against the indicators identified for project outcomes, the following can be said:

### 1. Community & system

The number of university teachers and students, schools and school teachers participating in the curriculum piloting has increased by more than double, so **this target has been exceeded**.

In fact, natural growth in numbers of students taking part in the programme due to subsequent years of learners, should lead to around a 100% increase per year in learners up to a plateau in the third year unless there is some form of institutional expansion: either increased capacity at existing institutions, or new universities joining the programme.

While the project is getting plenty of institutional recognition and internal MoES recognition, public recognition is likely to start to build from here on in. The project has been quite low profile to date, but the planned event publicising these report findings in November 2019 is likely to stimulate more press coverage and social media promotion.

### 2. Newly-qualified teacher & system

The numbers of students intending to actually become teachers is **a lot lower than the targeted 85%**. Estimates from Focus group discussions suggest this is more likely to be **below 30%**. See the discussion below on wider socio-economic factors. Motivations for taking these courses are often nothing to do with teaching. Information gathered from students during this study indicate that learners study English Language Teaching Methodology Courses as a way of improving their English. They see the EMC as an efficient way to increase their English proficiency, develop transferable skills, and earn university credit at the same time.

We will not be able to find out what percentage of students actually start work until after this report is published.

### 3. Newly-qualified teachers’ classroom readiness

Again, the actual percentage of graduates from PRESETT Bachelor’s programme demonstrating their professional competence through understanding learners, planning courses and sessions, managing the lessons, evaluating and assessing learning will not be known until data from all participating universities about graduating grades are compiled. However, having seen a cross section of this group, **we have no doubt that the percentage graduating with high levels of competence is going to be very high.**

### 4. All three outcomes

Satisfaction levels among student teachers of their Methodology training is at 85% according to our survey backed up by focus group responses, and so **is on target.**

From the focus groups, the readiness of students to start a teaching career in terms of skill development may not be as high. This very much depends on whether the student teacher has developed the required skills to perform in the classroom, or whether they want to enter the classroom as a career. Multiple factors impact on this and this is a suitable line of inquiry for a future study.

From our visits to four universities, 100% of university administrators, teacher mentors, and university teachers expressed satisfaction with PRESETT graduates’ level of methodology training, **exceeding the targeted 70%.** All university teachers also stated according to the survey that students were well (47%) or very well (53%) prepared for the classroom.

Similarly, over 90% of school teacher mentors rated student teacher professional readiness positively, **exceeding the target of 70%.**

There was no survey question on the satisfaction with levels of methodological support from universities, and the responses from school mentors in focus groups was mixed. This very much depends on the way the school manages their relationship with the schools and varies quite considerably across the participating institutions. Satisfaction with student methodology competence, however, **exceeds 90%**.

No survey was conducted with secondary school learners directly. However, reports from school teacher mentors within focus groups suggest very high levels of satisfaction and we would not be surprised if a future study found that that this **exceeded the target 80%**.

The Ministry of Education endorsement of the PRESETT Methodology Programme is imminent and likely to happen without many barriers. The programme is highly regarded at multiple levels within the ministry.

The detailed examination of results below is organised according to individual stakeholder groups in an attempt to give a sense of how successful the project has been across the board and to highlight the differences in perspective of each group as it pertains to that success.

## Student Teachers

Both student teachers in EMC (85%) and TMC (65%) are highly complementary of this course, stating that it was very useful, modern, interesting and effective. They stated in comments that their needs as student teachers were taken into account more and that the course prepared them well for teaching. The high emphasis on practice including use of interactive tasks were singled out as particularly important.

Sample comments from the survey include:

*I like such a methodology because it is incredibly interesting and involving. It gives the opportunity to improve the language skills, to interact with the groupmates, to prepare and conduct our own mini-lessons to the groupmates.*

*I graduated pedagogical college and I learned traditional methodology course of English. So, I have some experience to compare with. I do like a revised version. Because we had a great opportunity to learn theoretical material using different approaches and methods. It helps us to understand theoretical material better to master the skills of working in pairs and groups that help us to improve our speaking skills.*

The increased opportunity to use English throughout all lessons was also singled out as positive since many students take this course with the aim of improving their own language ability.

### Opinions of EMC students

They greatly appreciate the interactive nature of the lessons conducted by university lecturers which include a lot of activities. They are also given the opportunity to express their own thoughts and experiences, which are treated with respect by teachers. The increased opportunity for language practice has also enabled them to increase their proficiency levels through the course. This is one of the main motivations for taking the course (see below).

All students on EMC have noticed some improvement in their English language ability with 56% saying it was great improvement. No official testing has been done, (though this would add to the veracity of the evaluation) but our rough estimate is that EMC graduates have an average C1 to C1+ level of English while TMC graduates are generally B1+ to B2.

They see the course content as practical and meaningful. They can see how what they are learning transfers to the classroom, and recognise that there is recycling, but not repetition in the course. They are rarely, if ever, bored on the course, and feel inspired to be creative and contribute actively.

They are learning iteratively and collaboratively. They appreciate the amount of preparation the lecturers have put into their lessons and determine to do the same for their own students.

When asked what the main learning points on this course were for them, one group stated:

*We have to be psychologists. No matter how many people you know, or how much experience you have, you have to find the way to students’ hearts to be able to help them learn, and you can make them hate you if you do it the wrong way.*

They are able to express their views on language learning and teaching in a deep and sometimes profound way. The level of academic discussion in the focus groups and witnessed in classrooms was really very impressive.

Key success factors itemised by students in focus groups were:

* *Our teachers practice what they preach. We learned a lot through their demonstrations.*
* *Interaction is the main key. It created an immersive learning environment that was interesting and enjoyable.*
* *They made us think so we can make our students think.*

Problems were limited to some topics requiring more time than others, and timetabling issues, with the most common opinion being that the course is well designed, well delivered and prepares them well for the workplace. As one student put it:

*I see no problems. It is the perfect course.*

Student requests for further study on an MA course were mainly focussed on:

* specific methodologies such as Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), developing leaner autonomy, dealing with special educational needs (SEN) and integration of technology
* working with specific learner groups: adults, young learners, older learners
* exploring research methods in more detail

Student responses, then, were extremely positive, as can be seen in the following quotes:

*We are very thankful for such an interesting course. When I started, I thought we would learn a lot of rules, but I am pleasantly surprised at the levels of interactivity and the range of techniques that we are learning.*

*We fell in love with this course.*

*It is really important to use interactive activities to stimulate our students learning.*

*This course needs to be accepted on a government level and should be taught across all universities. It is a must have. It should be the law!*

### Opinions of TMC Students

What surprised me greatly was that the students who had taken TMC also felt that EMC was far superior. The survey results showed that 65% of TMC students would rather take EMC and this was further backed up in focus groups. This does not mean that they think TMC is a ‘bad’ course. TMC is also regarded well by student teachers.

However, there were a lot more negatives about the traditional course. While students said that, *‘it helped a lot on how to teach grammar and pronunciation’,* it was also *‘just basic information: We need more experience.’* And *‘It was very short: Not enough to be able to go into a class and teach.’* This focus on time, or rather the lack of it, is a recurring theme, *‘Theory without practice is just unproductive. We did get some practice but it was quite brief and we should have had more.’*, ‘*Brief and not so productive.’*

Where TMC Student Teachers were positive about their courses, there was often an actual or implied ‘but’:

*Yes (the course did prepare us for teaching children in the classroom). We had to produce lesson plans for each class. This gave us a clear understanding of lesson structure. It would have been better to see real children in schools. We watched videos but didn’t have school-based practice.*

When asked whether they would rather have taken the EMC, the response was overwhelmingly in its favour:

*The Experimental course gives a lot more school practice, one semester of theory and once a month practice was so little, and so difficult. We were like blind kittens. We didn’t know how it worked.*

*We devoted more time to writing documents rather than using the language. They have more choices.*

*Our teacher in methodology was good but the teaching practice and documentation was problematic.*

There was also a desire to reduce the number of subjects not directly related to their area of professional interest. Such subjects were seen to take up too much time in the curriculum and to be of little benefit to the learners. There is a great deal of passion associated with this issue. Students do not want to ‘waste their time’ studying subjects they see to be of little or no use in their futures. The baseline survey showed that 55% of study time is spent on non-pedagogy subjects. The New Ukrainian School guidelines recognise that the over-crowded, over-academic curriculum is a major issue in secondary education (Gryshchenko, 2016, p. 4). The students believe this is still a major issue in the Pedagogical University curriculum.

### Guidance within schools

While many student teachers had a very positive relationship with their school teacher supervisors, there were multiple issues in this area. Problems with supervision within schools were discussed by students on both EMC and TMC. School teachers in some cases seemed not to know how to support or mentor their supervisees:

*Some of us faced serious problems in school because our lessons were terrible and the teacher mentor told us they were horrible. She didn’t take us seriously and didn’t guide us. We didn’t get enough guidance in advance of the teaching practise either.*

*Some of the tasks we tried in class were too difficult for children. It would have been better to have them approved in advance.*

This points to potential issues with school selection, school-teacher preparation and orientation of the student teachers as well as the teacher supervisors. There were also disconnects between taught theory and teacher supervisor and learner expectations:

Many people were happy with their teacher mentors and this made a big difference, but it was clear that there was deep seated dissatisfaction about less optimal experiences:

*There was a lack of encouragement from mentors. So, a lot of people became unmotivated and didn’t even find any goals for the course and didn’t know why they should do it.*

### Language proficiency of EMC and TMC student teachers

Language proficiency levels of the EMC groups we talked to were C1 to C1+ in general. TMC students were largely B1+ to B2. The students themselves acknowledge this. Without prompting, students in H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University noted the potential reasons for this:

*Their English is much better than ours. Perhaps because they get more practice. They are using it more with children and are more motivated.*

### Performance of EMC student teachers

It was not only language proficiency levels that were impressive. The quality of student work was also very high. The level of reflection, the form of description of actions taken and results achieved, the specification of learning plans and the coherence of thought in those plans represents a very high level of performance.

We were privileged enough to be able to watch student-teachers micro-teach in each target institution. This was set up in such a way that a year 4 student micro-taught year 3 students that they had never met. In all of these ‘sample classes’ We were impressed by the forms of activities, the creativity of the content and the process types used, the coherence of lesson structure, and the level of reflection on their performance post lesson by the student learners.

The description of their abilities by their lecturers during focus groups is very accurate. They:

are autonomous

can reflect on what they have done

have mastered eliciting

are independent thinking

are more creative

know more about psychology and develop interest in new pedagogical approaches

can use backward design well

give feedback to each other in constructive ways

are ready to take feedback and use it constructively and help their development

### Motivations of EMC and TMC student teachers

One of the aims of this project was to increase the number of teachers deciding to enter the teaching profession. However, this may be working against much larger background social, economic and motivational issues:

*Many people on this course do not want to be teachers in the future. Most (80%) don’t want to be teachers. English language and second language improvement is the main goal. Most universities don’t teach the language itself or teach it in combination with another subject like science or maths.*

Many students noted that teacher salaries in Ukraine are so low that it is not an attractive option to go into a state school. The massive gender gap in Ukrainian schools is also blamed for this (80% of teachers in secondary are female according to UNESCO statistics, <http://data.uis.unesco.org/index.aspx?queryid=178>), as traditionally men are seen as breadwinners and teacher salaries are too low to be able to sustain a family, making the profession unattractive to men.

Many student teachers do work part time as teachers already. However, this is mostly in the private sector and as tutors for younger learners. In Pavlo Tychyna State Pedagogical University, Uman, 80% of the students we talked to, had such positions.

When asked whether they wanted to go into teaching in future, most said that if they did, it would probably be in another country. China is a major draw for many students because they are offering attractive remuneration in an exotic cultural environment. This has been spurred on by some alumni starting up their own schools in China and acting as a draw on new graduates. Other potential areas of employment are call centres, who pay better than teaching. The English language level that these graduates are achieving could open up many doors for them in industry and commerce post-graduation.

Generally then, both courses are well regarded but EMC is better regarded than TMC. It is seen as preparing student teachers more thoroughly for the classroom, helping English language ability develop more and helping give student teachers the confidence they need to be functioning professionals in the workplace.

## University Lecturers

The university lecturers we met are a very dedicated, hard-working, capable group of teachers. They have the best interests of their students at heart and are committed to contributing to increasing the quality of education in Ukraine.

Student opinions of university lecturers is high:

*One of the key success factors was the proficiency of the teacher: she really knows what she’s doing and is devoted to her job.*

*The teacher always knew the line between encouraging and diminishing something. She pointed out mistakes but didn’t berate us for them.*

There were also compliments for the way the programme had been organised. As student teachers, they were ‘looking behind the curtain’ so to speak and approving of what they saw:

*Programme organisation: one thing at a time building on top of each other with a building challenge.*

*Testing was done really well.*

In Vinnytsia State Pedagogical University, they divided groups randomly with no streaming, and students were informed of the differences in the courses. In H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University, they chose the students with the strongest English to take EMC. However, the end result is that there is very little difference in quality between the EMC student groups, or between the TMC student groups across universities. As one lecturer noted:

*When I was a student, I thought something should be done differently. This is it.*

### Success factors and learning points

Table 4 itemises the compiled success factors and learning points gathered through the focus group discussions. The success of this project has to be laid at the feet of the lecturers involved in designing and delivering the programme. We can see that the course content and structure have a very strong influence on the success of the course. Simply increasing the number of hours has helped but doing so meaningfully and in an understandable and practical way has given the course more stature in the minds of the lecturers and the participants.

Attitudinal change has been a major factor on the part of the lecturers. Moving away from the traditional view of a lecturer talking constantly and being the font of all knowledge has been a struggle for some but has generally been accepted as a refreshing change by most.

Once this attitudinal shift has happened, there seems there is no turning back. Of the 37 EMC teachers answering the online survey, when given the choice, none said that they wanted to teach TMC. Similarly, although only two TMC teachers answered the survey, both of them wanted to teach the EMC.

Finally, assessment is an area where both teachers and students feel the course does very well, although there is some concern that there may be too much of it. The portfolio system is generally praised but the students feel it is a burden to keep up and the Lecturers are unsure what to do with them when they receive them. This is one area that does require some attention. The open book exam, record keeping of observations and individual tasks are all well thought of, though there is some concern that some of the assessment tasks are overly bureaucratic and potentially less meaningful. The assessment process would benefit from an in-depth examination and pruning.

**Table 4: University Lecturers views of the Key Success factors and learning points throughout the PRESETT project**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Success Factors** | **Learning Points** |
| Course content and structure | High number of contact hours  Interaction between university sessions and school practice creates a real link between information, theory and practice.  Mini-lectures and more focus on practice  Much more student centred, nothing is imposed.  It is discovery oriented and allows learners to come to their own conclusions.  Student involvement and consultation. | Finding and developing teaching resources.  First year took a lot of time for preparation, second year was a lot easier and now we will be more comfortable.  Very demanding for us as we are not always equipped with the correct answers. But that is challenging, and we need to learn and be flexible.  Moving away from teacher to student centredness:  More group, team and pair work and lots of group switching.  Rearranging the desk setup  More responsibility for teaching each other in the classroom  Boundaries are blurring between English classes and Methodology classes. In English class, we can discuss methodologies used and in Methodology class, we can learn new language. |
| Attitudinal change | Many teachers had an emotional response to the new courses  New ideas, new content  Raised awareness of importance of practical methods. | Readiness of staff needs preparation. They do not accept new methods and ways of teaching.  Need to change themselves first of all, then they can make changes.  Could take some years for others to join. Opinions are fixed and they need convincing  We have learned to work in teams. |
| Teacher Learning | In-service training: A chance to see well-made lesson plans  Improvement in our own teaching:  Seeing students as partners in the classroom  Using backward design  Thinking strategically about a series of learning sessions and assessment at the beginning. | I don’t know about students but the teachers learned a lot!  I have learned more about meeting learning outcomes |
| Schools | The schools: without them, we couldn’t do it.  Partnership between schools and university has been developed. | Negotiating with schools. Explaining pros and cons.  Previoulsy, our students were trouble makers in schools. Now they are delivering better quality lessons and are considered an asset. |
| Assessment | Formative assessment and the form of the assessment (possibly critical in changing motivation to being more integrative)  Form of feedback is non critical and more reflective. | How to use portfolio assessment affectively. We still need to work on that.  Stopped echoing so much and started using other forms of error correction and feedback. |

## School Teacher Mentors

The process of moving gradually into full-time teaching is useful to student teachers: observed practice in year 2; activity teaching in year 3, and lesson teaching in year 4. One veteran teacher mentor of 13 years’ experience noted that:

*The programme is very important to help student teachers absorb the experience of our teachers and compare their observations with the written materials and theoretical descriptions. Our school proposed students to take part in actually delivering teaching but mostly, they are teaching assistants. For each lesson they have an observation plan. They need to fill in the form and compare to their methodology materials. There is not enough time for post lesson discussion, but it would be a good idea.*

This last point is important, there were several comments about the lack of time set aside for pre and post observation discussion. Another teacher noted that:

*They are not involved in planning so much. I would prefer more pre-lesson or post-lesson discussion. Maybe 20 minutes extra to discuss the lesson afterwards and maybe 30 minutes for planning.’* This suggests that the Mentors themselves need more time to become more available to the student teachers and to facilitate more discussion on planning procedures and to share their thought processes both before and after the lesson.

Furthermore, current guidance restricts student teachers to classroom assistants, but a more collaborative approach, earlier, would be useful according to both student teachers and mentors.

Two head teachers mentioned the issue of official certification for INSETT delivery. Currently universities and British Council are not registered INSETT providers, but this would be useful as existing British Council programmes could easily be implemented more widely.

### Teacher Development

The experience of mentoring has also led to significant effects on school teacher teaching practices. Because they are observed, teacher mentors feel more responsible. They tend to be more careful about their own teaching and spend more time planning and organising classes. Reflecting on their own teaching practice has become a lot more common among the teacher mentors, and their own teaching has become a lot more learner centred.

*This experience has been highly beneficial to me as a teacher to help me understand what I do and how I teach. My teaching has changed. I have been motivated to work harder and prepare more carefully. I have experimented with using new forms of activities like definitions of vocabulary reinforcement, games, linking, warm-ups.*

### University-School Communications

Of all the aspects of the project we examined, this was the least consistent. There are large variations among the universities of how rigorous this is, how much orientation school teachers have and how closely student progress and even attendance is monitored:

*Teaching Practice Supervisors may need tighter guidelines as skipping class observations might be more frequent than expected. There might need to be a review of that monitoring system.*

*There should be closer discussion between university and schools. More regular meetings and phone calls perhaps. We do feel that the university staff are approachable bit more contact would be helpful.*

More discussion among institutions and defining of good practice in this regard would benefit the students and school mentors involved. There generally seems to be an understanding that difficulties can be negotiated when they arise. In our view, however, difficulties should be anticipated, circumvented and mitigated where possible.

## University Rectors

All university lecturers noted that they had a great deal of support from their rectors and that this support was key to their success. All rectors displayed an in delph understanding of the programme, its aims, the difficulties faced in implementing it and the successes achieved. They were all able to discuss the project in depth and all held it in high regard.

As one Dean told us without hesitation:

*Graduates are better prepared to go into the classroom. They know what to do on Monday morning. They have strong practical competencies. They have already encountered teacher career challenges and know how to deal with them. They know how to deal with real situations in real classrooms. The hands-on experience and active teaching practice has given them experience in planning and knowing learners better.*

EMC has made such an impact in these four universities, that it will now be the only methodology course taught for English language teachers. Furthermore, a similar approach is going to be taken with other foreign language subjects, and moves are afoot to spread the methodology of EMC to other subjects.

Rectors noted that taking part in EMC development has led to more teachers becoming more interested in the methodology programme. This has grown organically. People with PhDs in linguistics and literature are more interested in it. And many teachers within the universities have undergone internal training on the EMC methodology in summer and winter schools. They have also noticed that there is more interest in CPD, that their teachers have changed the way they teach, and now use the knowledge and skills from the new course to make their lessons more learner-centred.

In H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University, the Rector and Vice Rector are interested in the programme, and lecturers in general pedagogy are interested in approaches to observations which they want to bring into teaching of physics and chemistry for example. This is also happening in Vinnytsia State Pedagogical University where the Rector intimated that they were, *‘Very happy to be a platform for implementing new innovative ideas. It is an effective programme and we are great supporters of the project.’* Teachers are dynamic and enthusiastic about their jobs and passionate about making this course work. The university leadership is most impressed by this and thankful for the efforts of the project team.

All rectors interviewed recommend that other universities join the programme and implement the EMC as soon as possible. They want to spread the message that this is the way of the future for Ukrainian education.

# Conclusion

Many of the development processes mentioned in the recommendations are underway and simply need to be directed into a more systematic form. There is a strong desire among the project team to revise and finalise project documentation. They also feel that given the outline MA programme suggested above, it would not take long to develop the whole course. The problem is funding and allotted time from their institutions and the MoES.

Regarding the INSETT recommendations above the case of Pavlo Tychyna State Pedagogical University, Uman is illustrative:

*In Pavlo Tychyna State Pedagogical University, Uman, we have changed the way we run our annual conference. We have now plenaries and workshops rather than paper presentations as in the past. This is stimulated by the new methodology course. We have trained our faculty as trainers of high school teachers. We currently work with ten high schools. They are more interested in working with us since the new methodology course was introduced.*

This suggest that MoES considers development of a network coordinated and managed by universities using new methodology course as a way of informing INSETT courses and ensuring that INSETT institutes are running training courses that synchronise with the new methodologies being introduced. The methodology teachers from universities can become trainers that work with their school networks.

From those school networks, they select individuals to be trained as trainers to work with other high school teachers with which the university has no connection. Schools buddy other schools and run teacher development activities for their teachers. This is an organic form of growth. Only those who are ready need to take part. In future, there should be standards statements that schools have to meet, and it would be at that point that other measures need to come into play, if there are learning deficits in either the project or non-project schools.