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## **DEVELOPING OF FUTURE SPECIALISTS' FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE IN THE PROCESS OF THEIR PROFESSIONALIZATION AT THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER TOURISM EDUCATION IN GERMAN-SPEAKING COUNTRIES**

**Abstract.** In the research foreign language competence is considered as a structural component of the professionalization of future skilled specialists in institutions of higher tourism education in German-speaking countries. The necessity of developing of foreign language competence in future specialists in tourism as the main component of professionalization in higher educational establishments is substantiated. The curricula of bachelor's and master's programs of tourism specialty in higher education institutions in Austria, Switzerland and Luxembourg are analyzed. It was found that foreign languages are a component of a professionally oriented block of disciplines, which forms the skills of future professionals in foreign language professional-oriented communication and ensures the orientation of graduates to the international labor market.

As a result of comparative analysis of the content and structure of vocational education and training of future specialists in tourism it is substantiated that the main components of foreign language competence as a competence cluster in the system of professionalization at the higher education institution are the communicative competence in foreign language environment and the competence of interpersonal interaction the formation of which significantly enhances the attractiveness of the future specialist, his competitiveness

in the global labor market and practical significance in accordance with the requirements of the globalized economic space and modern employers.

It is identified that communicative competence in a foreign language environment involves the acquisition and development of skills such as foreign language and intercultural literacy, persuasiveness, the ability to negotiate business in a foreign language, self-branding, management of foreign language information. Competence of interpersonal interaction is aimed at the formation of reflexivity, emotional stability, self-awareness and self-esteem, team building, time management and self-realization.

**Key words:** foreign language competence, professionalization, tourism, German-speaking countries, cluster approach.

## INTRODUCTION

Professionalization of a today's specialist at a higher education institution involves the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary for the effective solution of professional problems in a particular field of activity. However, globalization processes in the world economic space, in particular digitalization and internationalization of business relations, significantly expand the competence clusters of the educational component of human capital.

Requirements for vocational education and training are expressed in the specialist's model, the profессиogram and an invariant component of vocational education and training, that are considered to be a guide in the process of selection of the program content including disciplines and teaching methods. It is the future professional activity that dictates the content and forms of educational interaction. One of the central concepts of higher school pedagogy is the "specialist's model", which determines the requirements for vocational training [1].

The specialist's model is one of the most important concepts of higher school of pedagogy and provides a set of requirements for the graduates in the course of professional activity. The most important, according to researchers' point of views, are the model of activity and the model of vocational training [2].

The model of activity is focused on the study of the professional sphere of the future specialists, in particular: working conditions, necessary knowledge, skills, and professionally important qualities. They determine the system of requirements for the final result of professional training [1].

The vocational training model answers the question that a specialist needs for successful activities. The requirements of the specialist's model are a system-forming factor in the selection of the content of education and forms of its implementation within the educational process, as well as determine the qualities that are professionally important for all specialties and each specific specialty.

It should be noted that, on the one hand, the model of the specialist is the basis for planning the content and organization of the learning process for bachelor candidates, determining the role, place and scope of each discipline. On the other hand, all disciplines that are part of the vocational training course should contribute to the developing of specialist's personal qualities who already has got a set of certain professionally important qualities that meet the requirements of the specialist's model [3].

So, **the main point of this research** is to determine the conditions for the developing of foreign language competence of future specialists in tourism in the higher vocational institutions of German-speaking countries as a structural component of their professionalization and a necessary component of the specialist's model.

**Analysis of recent researches and publications.** There are some views concerning the different types of specialist's models in pedagogical researches. One of them is a professional qualification model that reflects types of professional activities in different positions and different jobs, responsibilities and functions, personal qualities, knowledge and skills. Such models are necessary for the selection and placement of personnel, for certification, for the preparation of training and retraining of specialists [2].

It is defined that the sphere of tourism covers 12 sectors: hotels and resorts; firms for the organization of retail sales of tours; wholesale tours; tourism marketing; cultural resources; natural resources; tourist administrations; tourist transport; conferences and competitions; entertainment and

attractions; food and drinks; and others (consultants, etc.) and 4 professional levels: Front Line Personnel – employees with the highest degree of interaction with the client (waiters, registrars, receptionists and other staff); Supervisors – employees who manage a group of employees, but are not responsible for the department as a whole (matron, nurse-housewife); Mid-level Management – staff responsible for the entire department (public relations managers at the hotel, human resources managers); High-level Management – staff with the authority of making strategic decisions (managers of regional tourism) [4].

Analyzing the full description of the typical responsibilities of future skilled specialists in tourism in accordance with certain professional levels, we can talk about a certain hierarchy of the tasks, which consists of individual levels. In particular, in the first place of this hierarchy are the tasks that must be able to solve all specialists, regardless of profession and country of residence. These are environmental tasks, tasks of continuous postgraduate education, tasks of the collegial nature of most types of today's production activities [5].

The second level consists of tasks that reflect the specifics of professional activity in a particular country, taking into account the peculiarities of economic development, as well as the ability to communicate effectively with representatives of other cultures [6].

Foreign language competence turns to be a professionally significant component of the process of vocational education and training of a highly qualified specialist in tourism. In the process of learning a foreign language, including the development of linguistic competence, the desire of the individual for self-education and independent, academic and professional activity is nurtured.

The language skills required for the professional activity of the future skilled specialist in tourism include the development of professionally-oriented communicative competence, complex education concerning linguistic, communicative, intercultural and socio-cultural competences needed for effective professionally oriented communication [7]. Thus, the development of communicative culture should be considered as an integral component of the professional growth of a successful manager in tourism.

According to what is said by I. Kukhta [8], the foreign language communicative culture of the future specialist in tourism is an integrative characteristic that determines the communicative and professional status of the individual and covers the focus on communication, ability to use a foreign language in a particular socio-cultural environment, internal readiness for intercultural interaction in the professional sphere. The structure of the foreign language communicative culture includes informational (correlated with the culture of thinking as a form of cognitive activity aimed at coding, perception and creation of information), interactive (correlated with the culture of interpersonal interaction necessary for communication in the activity-interaction paradigm), perceptual ability and assess the cultural context of foreign language communication) and motivational (orientation of the individual to intercultural interaction and attitude to mastering the foreign language communicative culture) components, the formation of which provides the development of qualities necessary for intercultural communication in professional activities within the sphere of tourism [8].

The third level of future skilled specialists' professional hierarchy in tourism is actually professional tasks making the main volume and exceeds the first two levels in diversity [9].

The main tasks of the competence approach include the following: to teach the individual to independently acquire and effectively apply knowledge throughout life; to forecast the situation and own activity; to make effective decisions according to life experience, values and available resources; to plan and control their own actions; to analyze and apply the experience gained. Thus, the competence approach has one extraordinary advantage; in particular it involves the development of a skilled specialist taking into account the conditions of global risks and societal challenges that pose a danger to all mankind [10].

**Research results.** It is known that the problem of the competence approach is in the focus of international organizations working in the field of education, in particular: UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, the Council of Europe, the Organization for European Cooperation and Development, the International Department of Standards.

Thus, according to the Recommendations of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU "Key competencies for lifelong learning" published on December 18, 2006, competencies are defined as a set of knowledge, skills and abilities, where knowledge consists of facts and numbers, concepts, ideas and theories, which are defined and characterized as the understanding of the subject and a particular area of activity, skills are defined as the ability to act and use the acquired knowledge to achieve results and abilities are defined as the disposition and direction of the mind to act or react to ideas, people or situations [11].

It is determined that the key competencies are certain knowledge, skills and abilities that humanity needs for personal realization and development, employment, social inclusion, sustainable and successful life, conscious self-government and active public position [11].

On May 22, 2018, the Council of Europe approved Recommendations on the developing of key competencies of future skilled specialists in the process of continuing education [12]. The document is addressed to the Europeans' need to develop key and fundamental skills in order to respond adequately to today's global challenges, maintain high employment rates and promote social identity and cohesion. Skills and competencies defined within a specific field of activity are of key importance, as they contribute to personal and professional realization, health, ability to work and social activity, contribute to strengthening European stability during rapid and significant changes. It is emphasized that economic knowledge, fact-finding and understanding of processes are important, but insufficient for personal and professional growth and success. Skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, collaborative thinking, creative and analytical thinking, self-regulation are more important in a changing society. They are tools for implementing theoretical knowledge into practice, generating new ideas, theories, products and knowledge.

So, the main position of the Council of Europe is the development of competency-based learning not only within secondary, but also higher and higher vocational education. In addition to the developing and improvement of basic competencies, attention is focused on investing in foreign language learning, improving digital and business competencies, the formation of fundamental skills for the development and implementation of research projects in professional activities. It is worth noting that German-speaking countries such as Switzerland and Austria outline the digital and entrepreneurial competencies of skilled specialists in the sphere of hospitality as a prerequisite for the successful emergence of the latest era of tourism development in countries, because the globalization and digitalization lead to dangerous challenges relating to the mismatch between demand and expectation, the ability and capacity to meet them. The reason is the unpreparedness of specialists and managers in the field of tourism to modernize the tourism labor market. For this purpose these countries intensively update the content of vocational education and training of future skilled specialists in tourism at the university level and at the same time carefully analyze innovations and adhere to the consistent modernization of curricula.

An extensive model of curricula prepared for the future skilled specialists in tourism in the German-speaking countries are presented as a process, which is the sequence of acquiring knowledge and skills through the study of their components. Each of the components of the curriculum is responsible for the development of certain competencies, the sequence of knowledge acquisition and the development of skills and abilities.

In the process of detailed consideration of curricula for professional training of future skilled specialists in tourism in the German-speaking countries, we focus on the structure and content of prerequisites for the developing of foreign language competence, an important element of which we consider the acquisition by bachelor's candidates soft skills.

So, the analysis of the curriculum of the Salzburg University of Applied Sciences (Austria) for the preparation of bachelor's candidates in specialty "Innovation and Tourism Management" involves training for 6 semesters. Students are provided with a comprehensive list of subjects with different amount of ECTS / classroom hours. In each semester, professionally oriented disciplines to which special attention is paid, are highlighted, for example "Fundamentals of business, economics" (8/5), "Tourism. Tourist marketing" (6/4), "E-marketing. Web Design" (5/4), "Entrepreneurship, business

planning"(5/4), etc. At the same time, students are aimed at the developing of key professional competencies, which should reflect the professional knowledge and experience of professional activity; personal and professional qualities and language abilities. The function of a foreign language is to provide opportunities for foreign language professionally oriented communication. In particular, in the first, second, third, fourth and fifth semesters, "English for Economics", "Foreign Language: Italian / Spanish" are studied by students. We can say that a foreign language is becoming a professionally significant component of the vocational training process and a significant factor in the orientation of graduates to the international labor market.

The master's degree includes 5 main modules ("Tourism Management", "Innovation Management", "Entrepreneurship", "Finance", "Business Management"), which is the basis of theoretical training of future skilled specialists in tourism. Such disciplines as "Leadership" and "Corporate Communications" are provided separately, which strengthen the development of such professional competencies as stress management, conflict management, self-awareness and self-esteem, team building, time management, self-realization. Given the fact that the vast majority of master's programs in German-speaking countries are provided in English, we can observe the purposeful developing of future specialists' skills of foreign language interpersonal interaction.

The analysis of the curricula for the vocational education and training of future specialists in tourism within the higher education institutions allows us to talk about the competence approach to their formation. The educational process involves the study of a obligatory cycle of disciplines and elective components. We have conditionally divided the obligatory and elective cycle of disciplines into separate components, in particular - professional, entrepreneurial, fundamental and foreign language oriented.

So, the analysis of the curriculum of vocational education and training of bachelors in specialty "Tourism" at the University of Applied Sciences in Graubünden demonstrates that in the first year of study (1 and 2 semesters) much attention is paid to the developing of soft skills in the classes with elements of training. In particular, in the first and second semesters the discipline "Soft Skills training" is allocated most of the curriculum time (6 ECTS) compared to other disciplines (4 ECTS). Besides, each of 6 semesters provides for the study of English and a second foreign language at option. In the fifth semester, students have the opportunity to study a third foreign language at option, which shows a high level of attention to the development of foreign language competence in graduates in accordance with the recommendations of the Council of Europe.

It is important to emphasize that the vast majority of master's programs in Switzerland, as in Austria, is in English, which confirms the process of internationalization of university-level tourism education in German-speaking countries.

In our opinion, the forming of a multilingual educational space, which is relevant in such German-speaking countries as Switzerland and Luxembourg, is important and effective for the development of foreign language competence of future specialists in tourism. Private universities in Switzerland and the University of Luxembourg are focused mainly on foreign applicants seeking quality vocational education in tourism. The educational process at universities is carried out exclusively in English, so a necessary condition for admission is a certificate of international assessment of the level of development of foreign language competence, which confirms the high level of language proficiency (B2 and above).

At the same time, in researched countries the status of "national" is assigned to several languages, in particular 4 in Switzerland (German, French, Italian and Romansh) and 3 in Luxembourg (Luxembourgish, French and German). This fact involuntarily creates a multilingual environment both inside and outside the higher education institutions.

The interdisciplinary aspect of tourism education plays an important role in the national and global labor markets concerning the latest global challenges in the tourism industry that have a direct impact on employers' expectations regarding the specific knowledge and competencies of managers and workers in tourism [13]. For example, it was emphasized that the leading world companies working in tourism hire graduates of European higher education institutions not only because of the

specific academic skills and knowledge in a particular specialty, but also of the ability to show initiative, find and respond to problems creatively and autonomously in full interlingual and intercultural understanding.

**Conclusions and prospects for further research.** Given the results of the research allows us to talk about foreign language competence in the system of professionalization of future skilled specialists in tourism within the higher education as a cluster, which includes two main components – communicative competence in a foreign environment and competence of interpersonal interaction.

Communicative competence in a foreign language environment involves the acquisition and development of skills such as foreign language and intercultural literacy, persuasiveness, the ability to negotiate business in a foreign language, self-branding, management of foreign language information. Competence of interpersonal interaction is aimed at the formation of reflexivity, emotional stability, self-awareness and self-esteem, team building, time management and self-realization.

Thus, the development of foreign language competence as a cluster, in our understanding, greatly enhances the attractiveness of the future specialist, his competitiveness in the global labor market and practical significance in accordance with the requirements of the globalized economic space and today's employers.

The prospect of further research we see in the analysis of the conditions for the developing of foreign language competence as a competency cluster in the process of professionalization of future specialists in tourism in Ukraine and conducting a comparative analysis to predict possible qualitative changes.

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## ФОРМУВАННЯ ІНШОМОВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ У ПРОЦЕСІ ПРОФЕСІОНАЛІЗАЦІЇ МАЙБУТНІХ ФАХІВЦІВ СФЕРИ ТУРИЗМУ В ЗАКЛАДАХ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ НІМЕЦЬКОМОВНИХ КРАЇН

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**Анотація.** У дослідженні розглянуто іншомовну компетентність як структурний компонент професіоналізації майбутніх фахівців у закладах вищої туристичної освіти німецькомовних країн. У результаті компаративного аналізу змісту та структури професійної підготовки майбутніх фахівців сфери туризму обґрунтовано, що основними складниками іншомовної компетентності як компетентнісного кластера у системі професіоналізації здобувачів вищої освіти є комунікативна компетентність в умовах іншомовного середовища та компетентність міжособистісної взаємодії, сформованість яких значною мірою підсилює привабливість майбутнього фахівця, його конкурентоспроможність на світовому ринку праці та практичну значущість відповідно до вимог глобалізованого економічного простору та сучасних роботодавців. Комунікативна компетентність в умовах іншомовного середовища передбачає набуття та розвиток таких навичок, як іншомовна та міжкультурна грамотність, переконливість, уміння ведення ділових переговорів іноземною мовою, селф-брендінг, управління іншомовною інформацією. Компетентність міжособистісної взаємодії спрямована на формування рефлексивності, емоційної стійкості, самоусвідомлення та самооцінки, командоутворення, тайм-менеджменту та самореалізації. Таким чином, формування іншомовної компетентності як кластеру, у нашому розумінні, значною мірою підсилює привабливість майбутнього фахівця, його конкурентоспроможність на світовому ринку праці та практичну значущість відповідно до вимог глобалізованого економічного простору та сучасних роботодавців.

**Ключові слова:** іншомовна компетентність, професіоналізація майбутніх фахівців, сфера туризму, німецькомовні країни, кластерний підхід.

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