



Formation of Foreign Language Communicative Competence of the Specialists in Tourism from the Point of View of Diversification of Professional Touristic Education

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Abstract

The article considers certain aspects of formation of foreign language communicative competence of the future specialists in the tourism industry as one of the most significant competences in the structure of their professional work, facilitating professional communication in a foreign language.

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INTRODUCTION

The beginning of the 21st century, continuing the tendencies of steady development, can be characterized as a whole new stage in the development of science, technology and their interaction with society. Modern science becomes more and more distinct activity directed at development of new technologies not only on the basis of natural, but also humanitarian sciences, like sociology, psychology and pedagogy. The relevance of a technology in these fields is preconditioned by social demand aimed at the ability of citizens to work together in a team, showing necessary communicative skills and competences, be flexible in adaptation towards changing environment. It is exactly those technologies that help to reach this goal that are relevant in the modern world.

Educational technologies hold a special place among such technologies, since the education system is closely related to the basics of social and economic structure of society and the dominating direction in the life of society. Due to transferring to market economy the Russian educational system received new tasks that present two interconnected processes. One is connected with the improvement

of the educational system and presupposes standardization of education and in this respect, intensification of studying and learning activity. The other one is aimed at renovation of the content and methodology of education, which presupposes formation of new concept approaches in education and detection of innovation opportunities and patterns in educational process.

Innovations in education and pedagogy are called to solve the problem of retardation of professional education from the demands of modern society to professional knowledge, skills and competences of specialists and prepare competitive professional employees that would meet both the needs of the country and the tendencies of the global labor market.

The development of a modern scientific concept of professional education that would meet new social requirements requires analytical supervision of the market of educational services and, according to many researchers, consideration of diversification processes in the system of professional education. When speaking of diversification of professional tourism education, A.I. Seselkin, for example, claims

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that it is not only the result of development of professional qualification structure of tourism, but it also directly influences the content of the system of professional tourism education, which is manifested in diversification of a range of educational programs, education forms and educational institutions in the field of tourism and, as a result, demands their renovation [10].

At the same time the author emphasizes the importance of formation of communicative competence of future tourism specialists, claiming that "the development of communicative competence of future tourism specialists becomes a more and more pressing issue, without solving which it is impossible to instill in students such qualities as the ability to make right decisions quickly, tenacity, reasonableness, inclination to obey conventional etiquette, tact, confidence, composure in tough situations, i.e. the qualities, demand for which is high now and will be increasing in the future" [10, p.57].

Communicative competence, defining the readiness for two-way systemic communication between manufacturers and consumers, presupposes efficient individual ways of interaction and cooperation with the state, companies and other social partners, including foreign partners, which actualizes the problem of formation of foreign language communicative competence (FLCC) in specialists of this industry and brings forward this task to the system of professional tourism education as a priority direction in foreign language teaching.

Investigating foreign language communicative competence as a pedagogical problem of its formation in future specialists of the tourism industry prescribes theoretical analysis of this problem, studying the extent of its prior investigation on practice, defining the main components and characteristics of FLCC, which are professionally important and significant for future tourism specialists, and finally, singling out a new aspect of the investigated problem, defining the professional status of the future tourism specialist. Considering communicative competence as knowledge of the ways of orientation in different situations and fluency in verbal and nonverbal means of communication, as an ability to act in the situation of uncertainty, as a system of inner resources necessary for building effective interpersonal interaction in a certain range of situations [1, 6, 8, 9 et al.], we conclude that in the work of tourism specialists communicative competence is a professionally determined personal quality, since the success of their professional work directly depends on the skill to establish and maintain contacts with other people (clients and business partners) in a manner conforming to the social norms, rules and

professional etiquette. Moreover, in our opinion, professional communicative competence of tourism specialists, depending on individual and personal traits of a person, their life experience, profession, interests, inclinations, emotions, worldview, status of a person in a group, and also on their communicative culture that presupposes the culture of interpersonal relationships, speech culture, social skills, outgoingness, emotional stability, is a professional "metacompetence" that combines and soaks up special pragmatist, sociocultural and personal competences, metacompetence being formed by these competences and at the same time forming them [2-5; 11-13].

As a professionally conditioned quality of a tourism specialist, communicative competence means that for efficient performance of their professional responsibilities a tourism specialist should have not only knowledge and skills in communication, but also professional readiness to act in accordance with modern goals of tourism development under cultural globalization.

Having defined communicative competence as an integral professional metacompetence for tourism specialists, let us turn our attention to the notion of "foreign language communicative competence" and determine to what extent it is relevant in the structure of professional work of specialists in this field.

By ensuring the communication process among representatives of various regions, social and national groups, facilitating interaction and understanding among people of different nations, tourism as no other social phenomenon of modern times presents vast opportunities for direct contact with representatives of foreign countries. This circumstance requires from the specialists directly engaged in this field having command of the languages of international communication, which is documented in the Qualification requirements to the professional level of the employees in the field of tourism in respect to corresponding sectors and subsectors of tourism industry as "work with foreign clients (in the language of the clientele)" [7]. Thus, professional standards prescribe compulsory knowledge of a foreign language for hotel employees of any kind. At the same time, at 1 or 2 star hotels it is enough for the employees of the front office to know one foreign language (of international significance), when for the employees of 3-4 star hotels all staff that has any contact with the guests must know two internationally spoken languages on a higher level, and for 5 star hotels all staff that works directly with the guests must know at least three foreign languages.

Here we must emphasize that it means not only that specialists must understand a certain foreign language, but mainly that they must be ready to use

a foreign language as a means of intellectual and social interaction with the people speaking this language, convey, receive and analyze the received information, solve rising contradictions and conflicts, express and defend their opinion, make decisions, i.e. the presence of a foreign language communicative competence in a specialist of a tourism industry, which actualizes the task of formation of such competence in the specialists of the tourism field.

Of course, the requirements to the level of FLCC set forth to the employees providing organization services, transportation, accommodation, cooking, having limited or highly specialized contact with foreigners are significantly different from the level of requirements to contact personnel that provides sociocultural services. They depend on the nature of contacts, their types and forms, circumstances of their occurrence, their nature, longevity, intensiveness, etc., and are regulated by the main document in the field "On the qualification requirements (professional standards) to the main positions of the tourism industry employees".

Since the main load in the field of intercultural communication is placed on the staff that receives foreign tourists (guides, interpreters, etc.), then the hardest requirements with respect to FLCC are set for them: knowledge of the route, sights, culture of their own country and the country of the tourists, attention to the nature of interaction of cultures, specifics of verbal and nonverbal communication, skill to use this knowledge in the situations of intercultural communication to solve problems connected with the tourists being placed in the foreign socio-linguo-cultural environment.

The same high standard requirements in this respect are placed on the specialists in touristic advertising, marketing, public relations and entertainers. On the level of their FLCC depends the success of advertising campaigns, numerous consumer qualities of a touristic product and finally the efficiency of interaction of the subjects of the international touristic activity.

At the same time, it is worth mentioning that the FLCC requirements to the contact personnel of the first qualification level (waiters, bartenders, maids, porters, doormen, cashiers, etc.), with whom foreign guests come in contact at a restaurant, hotel, airport, during visiting sights, are also quite high, since they prove the readiness of the touristic personnel of the lower qualification level to receive and serve foreign citizens and promote positive image of Russia as a country of international tourism abroad.

In view of the foregoing, we believe that in the structure of professional work of specialists of the tourism industry FLCC is in high demand on all qualification levels of the tourism industry employees. However, depending on the directions

of work, complexity and volume of executed responsibilities, the requirements to the level of FLCC for contact and non-contact touristic personnel is different in corresponding sectors and subsectors of the tourism industry, which should be reflected in formation of FLCC in the system of professional touristic education.

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