

CHALLENGES OF DEVELOPING FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE AMONG TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY STUDENTS UNDER MARTIAL LAW

ВИКЛИКИ ПРИ ФОРМУВАННІ ІНШОМОВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ У СТУДЕНТІВ ТУРИЗМУ ТА ГОСТИННОСТІ У ВОЄННИЙ ЧАС

The dynamics of tourism and hospitality development significantly depends on the favourable conditions within the country. The full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war has led to a certain level of outbound tourism stagnation. Thus, the problem of forming professional competencies for tourism and hospitality industry students involves acquiring new features related to crisis conditions and ways to overcome crisis and post-crisis phenomena. Meanwhile, the strengthening of Ukraine's European integration links and the activation of friendly relations with numerous world countries create a foundation for positive forecasts for the further post-war development of tourism sphere. It also implies a certain transformation of professional training programs for tourism and hospitality students, particularly in those aspects which adapt the training system to foreign experience and promote the integration of the Ukrainian tourism system into the European and global one.

First and foremost, this requires proper knowledge of foreign languages (English as the language of international communication) – the primary tool for implementing ambitious intentions in tourism sphere.

The objective of the article lies in the analysis of challenges tourism education faces under wartime conditions, considering the current event context and the possibilities for developing the tourism industry in the near post-war future. The specified objective has been focused both on future prospects and on the ways of maximizing the revival of tourism in the current wartime situation. The emphasis is placed on the specific aspects where an adequate level of foreign language competence is equivalent to discovering and realizing new opportunities at a critical time of war.

The formation of foreign language competence of future tourism and hospitality specialists is defined as a means of expanding the foreign career opportunities for tourism and hospitality industry graduates. The education system of Ukraine is currently facing the following challenges: students lack a safe place guarantee, need provision of vital resources, as well as psychological and emotional support. Educational institutions are not provided with the necessary material and technical base; constant tension and stress lead to deterioration in the mental health of participants in educational communication, which results in a decrease in motivation to learn and teach. Wartime poses special threats and challenges for tourism and hospitality industry education.

Key words: *tourism education, foreign language competence, martial law, wartime tourism, hospitality industry, tourism sphere.*

Динаміка розвитку туризму та гостинності значною мірою залежить від сприятливих

умов усередині країни. Повномасштабна російсько-українська війна призвела до певного рівня стагнації виїзного туризму.

Таким чином, проблема формування професійних компетенцій студентів сфери туризму та гостинності набуває нових рис, пов'язаних із кризовими умовами та шляхами подолання кризових і післякризових явищ. Водночас зміцнення євроінтеграційних зв'язків України та активізація дружніх стосунків з багатьма країнами світу створюють підґрунтя для позитивних прогнозів щодо подальшого повоєнного розвитку сфери туризму та гостинності. Це також передбачає певну трансформацію програм професійної підготовки студентів; зокрема в тих аспектах, які адаптують систему навчання до іноземного досвіду та сприяють інтеграції української туристичної системи в європейську та світову.

Насамперед це вимагає належного знання іноземних мов (англійської як мови міжнаціонального спілкування) – основного інструменту реалізації амбітних намірів у сфері туризму.

Метою статті є аналіз викликів, з якими стикається туристична освіта в умовах воєнного часу, враховуючи поточний контекст подій та можливості розвитку індустрії туризму в найближчому повоєнному майбутньому. Зазначена мета зосереджена як на перспективу, так і на шляхи максимального відродження туризму в нинішній воєнний час.

Акцент робиться на конкретних аспектах, де достатній рівень володіння іноземною мовою є еквівалентом відкриттю та реалізації нових можливостей у критичний час війни. Формування іншомовної компетентності студентів визначено як засіб розширення можливостей закордонної кар'єри для випускників сфери туризму та гостинності. Сьогодні система освіти України стикається з наступними проблемами: відсутність гарантії безпечного місця навчання, потреба забезпечення життєво важливими ресурсами, а також психологічної та емоційної підтримки. Навчальні заклади не забезпечені необхідною матеріально-технічною базою; постійна напруга та стрес призводять до погіршення психічного здоров'я учасників навчального спілкування, що призводить до зниження мотивації до навчання та викладання. Воєнний час створює особливі загрози та виклики для туристичної освіти.

Ключові слова: *туристична освіта, іншомовна компетентність, воєнний стан, туризм воєнного часу, індустрія гостинності, сфера туризму.*

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Problem Presentation. Due to rapid globalization processes at the beginning of the 21st century, special attention is paid to education aimed at training specialists ready to function in a multicultural society. This involves the ability

to use more than one language and to cooperate with the representatives of different cultures, nationalities, religions, and social environments [10]. In the paradigm of professional training of tourism and hospitality students, a foreign language

is fundamentally important not only as a general education subject but also as a professional one.

Despite the unfavourable wartime conditions for tourism development and a certain stagnation in this sphere caused by the reduction in the number of foreign tourists in Ukraine, tourism industry in Ukraine is actively working towards the postwar perspective, when a significant strengthening of tourism ties with countries both near and far is expected.

The fact that Ukraine chaired within the framework of the 68th session of the European Commission of the UN World Tourism Organization (Sofia, Bulgaria, 2023) provides the country with a broad potential for close cooperation with European and world countries on a professional international level [12].

Therefore, analyzing the current level of foreign language competence of tourism and hospitality students, the war should be perceived simply as a new reality in which tourism, as an important component of the economy and a country's hallmark, is forced to operate [11]. Due to the development of inbound tourism, Ukraine can also intensify other sectors related to tourism, such as trade or even investment activities.

The official websites of tourism companies and the State Agency for Tourism Development in Ukraine (SATD) states that outbound tourism, for which foreign language competence is most relevant, is also gradually recovering despite the ongoing war [1].

Moreover, the mobility of the workers in tourism sector is increasing. This means that foreign markets for tourism services are potentially open to Ukrainian tourism and hospitality professionals, where they can find profitable employment. However, knowledge of English as the language of international communication is an obligatory condition of career realization for tourism industry workers worldwide.

Knowledge of foreign languages is advantageous, but the emphasis is on English, without which foreign language competence is currently unthinkable. Modern global socio-economic changes have significantly influenced tourism industry worldwide, transforming it into a multi-sectoral field aimed at serving and satisfying tourists' needs. The growth of world travel indicates expanding intercultural contacts between different linguistic and cultural groups. Therefore, higher education institutions specializing in tourism and hospitality face the important task of training competent specialists capable of effective intercultural interaction.

Literature Review. Scientific research of the Ukrainian scientists N.Ivasiv, I.Kodliuk, N. Sarnovska, S.Tanana and V.Zigunov [2,3,7,8] is devoted to the study of certain problems of foreign language competence of the future specialists of tourism and hospitality. The formation of foreign language competence in crisis situations has been studied by the world scientists: (K.Ando, J.Basilisco, A.Deniega,

K.Gador, P.Geraldo); foreign language training under wartime conditions – by G.Dishel, L.Golikov, O.Chernoruk, O.Nalyvaiko, L.Pryimak, R.Poznansky, N.Savchuk. Our research results take into account the destructive factors of wartime conditions and can be helpful in forming successful conceptual foundations for the process's implementation and in understanding certain parts of its methodology.

The **objective** of the article lies in the analysis of the problems and challenges of developing foreign language competence among tourism students in wartime conditions.

Discussion. Through the experience of enduring the war and the need to fulfil educational obligations to students, the Ukrainian education system highlights how the war affects the learning process. S. Medynska emphasizes that consideration of the impact of wartime factors in the country should become decisive when adapting educational and professional programs for the training of future tourism and hospitality specialists [5].

The conditions of the Russian military invasion have created a number of challenges and tasks that need to be addressed through the informational and analytical support of education in Ukraine. Among the most actual tasks we single out:

- maintaining the security of the educational information infrastructure (cyberattacks and viral attacks on the information systems of educational institutions, disrupting their normal operations and data security);
- ensuring access to educational resources (the conditions of military conflict often lead to restricted access to educational resources, especially in most affected zones);
- improving the quality of informational support (students and educators must be substantially and systematically informed on the updates and situation in the country and the education sector);
- providing psychological support (informational support for education must include psychological support to ensure the resilience of both the teaching staff and the students) [6].

The Covid-19 pandemic and the military invasion of Ukraine, which have resulted in a highly stressful social situation, presented one of the most significant challenges for Ukrainian science and education – transition to distance education. Due to restrictions on gatherings, most schools, and universities switched to distance learning, causing significant difficulties for educational and scientific-pedagogical staff as well as learners at all levels. This required adapting to a new form of education and using new technologies. Regarding the challenges associated with the situation of the military invasion, the following can be highlighted:

- lack of educators: scientists, scientific-pedagogical workers, and teachers are leaving the

country (women), shifting focus to the defense of the country (men), changing their place of residence (temporarily displaced persons), and, unfortunately, human losses.

– reorganization of the functioning educational institutions. The military conflict situation can lead to a decline in the level of education in the country. This is due to the evacuation of students and teachers from the war zones or their departure abroad, reduced funding for educational institutions, and a decrease in the number of teaching hours;

– limiting access to international cooperation. The objective reasons are: a ban on travel for conscription-age men, or relocation. Subjectively, emotional stress of the population can impair cognitive needs and abilities. The military invasion situation can restrict scientists and scientific institutions' access to international cooperation, hindering scientific progress and development [6].

Nonetheless, the internationalization process of Ukrainian education transforms the need for foreign language knowledge into an urgent necessity for the practical and intellectual activities of any modern society member. Foreign language competence in a rapidly changing world is a significant factor influencing the socio-economic, scientific-technical, and overall cultural progress of society, as well as an important means of integrating into the international community.

Our research has been focused on the aspect of teaching foreign languages under wartime conditions. This requires teachers to adapt didactic materials to the country's realities, removing Russian place names, foreign language texts about Russian cities, excluding Russians as participants in educational dialogues, destinations of Russia in educational reports and resort presentations as such references were traditionally present in teaching resources, especially those related to tourism. It is now considered to be unethical to use textbooks, websites, or any other resources of Russian origin or created by collaborator states. Existing studies related to the current topic also analyze technologies for working with search and creative tasks, reading texts on wartime topics, or those corresponding to current wartime realities, the methodology of using traditional foreign language training exercises in distance and blended formats according to typical communicative situations during wartime. Given the wartime context, there is a need to introduce the current vocabulary (e.g., martial law, curfew, army assistance, collaborators, refugees, military invasion, military operation, etc.) and to activate it during training communication [4]. Recommendations are provided for wartime-related foreign language training topics. It is proposed to cover not only professionally related but also personal communication topics associated with the war, requiring appropriate lexical

support. However, the peripheral nature of attention to the issues of foreign language learning by tourism and hospitality industry students under wartime conditions in Ukraine necessitates further research in this direction and defines the objective of the current study.

To sum up, the Ukrainian educators have to consider the psychological and emotional aspects of managing the foreign language learning process during the war.

Therefore, the issue of developing foreign language competence of future specialists of tourism and hospitality industry in times of war is clearly defined as a strategic issue of national importance, since tourism is an effective means of establishing international contacts and creating a global positive image of the country.

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