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ANALYSIS OF THE ASPECTS OF PROFESSIONALISM OF A TOUR GUIDE

Nowadays the industry of tourism remains to be highly profitable, the investment in which will pay off quickly. The number of employees in the world tourism industry in 2018 was equal to approximately 760 million.

The most demanded in the period of formation of inter-state integration are the highly qualified experts in tourism with the knowledge of foreign languages and, thus, are able to cooperate with foreign clients, make independent decisions in real situations, see the prospects and plan the strategy and tactics of the industry.

According to the Tourism Survey (2018) the introduced figures emphasize the fact that the profession of a tour guide is presently of high demand and importance in tourism industry. The research in tour guides' professionalism has received little attention from the tourism academic community.

Having analyzed the views of training the successful workers of tourism industry, the Ukrainian scientists claim that the real tourism expert has to be characterized by high professionalism, progressiveness, communicativeness, competitiveness in the labor market. All these features are combined in the career of a tour guide as a representative of the perspective and well-developed industry.

For our study it is essential to give the distinct working definition of the profession of a tour guide, namely: a tour guide is a qualified professional of high culture who possesses the profound knowledge of the guided destination, foreign language proficiency and is skilled at directing and leading tourists on a sightseeing area.

Thus, the significant aspects of formation of tour guides' professionalism (communication skills, foreign language proficiency, presentation skills, oratory, transformational leadership) are studied; the pedagogical methods of information presentation are transferred into the profession of a tour guide.

The roles of a tour guide are various and need our profound further research.

Key words: tour guide, professionalism, aspects of professionalism, training process.

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АНАЛІЗ АСПЕКТІВ ПРОФЕСІОНАЛІЗМУ ТУРИСТИЧНОГО ГІДА

Сьогодні галузь туризму залишається високоприбутковою, інвестиції в яку характеризуються високою окупністю. Кількість працівників у світовій галузі туризму у 2018 році становила приблизно 760 мільйонів осіб.

Найбільш затребувані в період міждержавної інтеграції висококваліфіковані фахівці з туризму, які володіють іноземними мовами і здатні співпрацювати з іноземними клієнтами, ухвалювати самостійні рішення в реальних ситуаціях, бачити перспективи планувати стратегії і тактики галузі.

Наведені міжнародною статистикою (2018 рік) у галузі туризму цифри підкреслюють той факт, що професія туристичного гіда сьогодні має високий попит та значення в туристичній галузі. Постає висока необхідність дослідження професіоналізму туристичних гідів через недостатню увагу, приділену даній проблемі, туристичною академічною спільнотою.

Здійснивши аналіз поглядів на підготовку успішних працівників туристичної галузі, українські вчені стверджують, що основними характеристиками експерта з туризму є: високий професіоналізм, прогресивність, комунікативність і конкурентоспроможність на ринку праці. Усі вищенаведені особливості вдало поєднуються у професії туристичного гіда як представника перспективної та високорозвиненої галузі.

Для нашого дослідження важливо запропонувати чітке робоче визначення професії туристичного гіда, а саме: туристичний гід – це кваліфікований професіонал високої культури, який володіє глибокими знаннями щодо робочої дестинації, іноземною мовою, а також має навички проведення екскурсій.

У результаті дослідження здійснено вивчення основних аспектів формування професіоналізму туристичних гідів (навички спілкування, володіння іноземною мовою, навички презентації, ораторське мистецтво, трансформаційне лідерство); застосування педагогічних методів подання інформації втілено у професійну діяльність туристичного гйда.

Ролі туристичного гйда різноманітні, потребують глибокого подальшого вивчення і будуть висвітлені в наших наступних дослідженнях.

Ключові слова: туристичний гйд, професіоналізм, аспекти професіоналізму, навчальний процес.

Introduction. Today the information age provides the process in which the material values are effectively substituted for the spiritual values such as impressions and feelings, which become the main purpose of travelling. The world tourism has become the reason for the development of transport communications network, connection, increasing mobility, reduced working hours and growth of public wealth. In these conditions the socio-economic positions of tourism are rapidly strengthened. In the world market, the industry of tourism holds a leading position on an equal basis with the oil industry. The research confirms the undeniable fact that, despite the numerous challenges, the industry of tourism remains to be highly profitable, the investment in which will pay off quickly.

The tourism industry offers more jobs each year (approximately 137 million people were employed in tourism industry in 2001). The World Tourism Organisation's new secretary-general, Zurab Pololikashvili, stated that he "went on to reveal just how many people, on a global level, work with in the travel sector". He declared: "Tourism is a people's sector. One in ten people in the world are directly or indirectly employed by tourism. Ours is the responsibility to ensure that tourism benefits each and every community, leaving no one behind." The figure claimed by the secretary in 2018 was equal to approximately 760 million people. Zurab Pololikashvili took up on himself to lead the World Tourism Organisation with a strong focus on building partnerships with public and private sector, fostering jobs and opportunities for all, mastering technology and innovation and advancing sustainability (WTO, 2018).

The most demanded in the period of formation of inter-state integration are the highly qualified experts in tourism with the knowledge of foreign languages and, thus, are able to cooperate with foreign clients, make independent decisions in real situations, see the prospects and plan the strategy and tactics of the industry.

For whatever purpose tourists travel to different countries, the journey is always characterized by the cognitive element. The tourists get new information, impressions and feelings, on the basis of which new knowledge is formed, the world view of the values changes (Sokol, 2006: 169). This is facilitated by

information and excursion work in tourism, done by the main performers of excursion activity – tourist guides. It is tour guides' skills that determine the ultimate cognitive effect that the traveler receives, which in its turn necessitates the professional training of such professionals.

Objective. The article is dedicated to the analysis of the aspects which play the significant role in the formation of a tour guide's professionalism in modern conditions of educational process.

Methodology. There search is relied on the following methods: theoretical (analysis of scholarly work in pedagogy, linguistics and are a studies regarding methodological approaches to teaching English as a foreign language), empirical (modeling real-world communication scenarios), and practical (exercises and projects for the formation of tour guides' professionalism).

Literature Review. The previous studies of foreign scientists' research on tour guiding have mainly focused on tour guides' roles (Cohen, 1985; Weiler, Yu, 2007); tour guides' performance (Geva, Goldman, 1991; Mossberg, 1995); tourist satisfaction with tour guide services (Wong, 2001), and tour guide administration system (Sokol, 2006). The content and methods of professional training of tourist guides were studied in detail by the following Ukrainian scientists: I. Chegaida, S. Grybanova, V. Babarytska, A. Korotkova, O. Karolop.

Despite the fact that the problems of tour guides' role, performance, training and administration system have found their partial coverage in certain scientific works, some aspects of the problem of training professional tour guides remaining sufficiently studied.

Problem Presentation. For the data of our study, we draw insights from the 2018 Tourism Survey, based on the answers from 786 tour and activity operators located in 112 countries world wide with approximately 7,225 tour guides (Tourism Trends, 2018).

From the results we can see that the number of tour guides in the world who work as permanent employees reaches 29% of tour and activity companies; part-time tour guides – 27%; a lower number of full-time base staff – 21%. This is usually due to the seasonal tour guides – 23%.

According to the Tourism Survey (2018) the participant companies are located around the world, but still a clear majority of guides are European (37,5%). This figure is followed by South America (17,8%), Asia (16,3%) and North America (13,8%), Africa (9,8%) and Australia (4,7%). With the research of the gender we found out that 40% of the total number of tour guides are the females. In contrast, the number of male guides in the Middle East countries exceeds 90% (Tourism Trends, 2018).

The introduced figures emphasize the fact that the profession of a tour guide is presently of high demand and importance in tourism industry. The analysis of the research devoted to the professionalism of the tour guide indicates at the complexity, multidimensionality and insufficient research of this problem.

Discussion. The Ukrainian hospitality industry and tourism researcher L. Kozak states that “today the industry needs specialists who could work independently and creatively, generating competent innovations, new ideas and suggestions by demonstrating the ability to successfully introduce them into a competitive environment”. According to his study, the requirements for the expert’s personal and professional qualities are increasing which reflect professional competence, provide competitiveness in the labor market, promote professional self-realization and career growth (Kozak, 2009: 68).

N. Fomenko emphasizes that training workers for tourism as a cultural and social phenomenon, being aimed at the state and social value, defines the leading principles of educational policy for the benefit of a human, society and state. The author points out that training of the professionals for the industry is the process of progressive and evolutionary character (Fomenko, 2005: 110).

O. Liubitseva stresses that “the entry of Ukraine into the world tourism process needs adequate staffing as the level of service in tourism depends largely on the level of training employees”. The researcher points out that the unique feature of the industry is the significant number of interpersonal contacts. The communication component of tourist service is provided by the staff at practically all stages of serving tourists. The dynamics of the industry (technological, marketing, information innovations) needs an appropriate dynamic training system, the objective of which is the workers capable of working at the world and European standards (Liubitseva, 2003: 357).

Having analyzed the views of training the successful workers of tourism industry, the above mentioned scientists claim that the real tourism expert has to be characterized by high professionalism, progres-

siveness, communicativeness, competitiveness in the labor market. In our opinion, all these features are combined in the profession of a tour guide as a representative of the perspective and well-developed industry.

For our study it is essential to give the distinct working definition of the profession of a tour guide. A tour guide has been defined as “some one who takes people on sight seeing excursions of limited duration” (Mancini, 2001: 5). Where as Collins determines tour guide as “an individual who directs the way; who heads others on a trip or tour; and one who directs or serves as the model for another in his conduct, career” (Collins, 2000: 22). Over end specifies the professional tour guide as “a performer and an interpreter, at the centre of the experience”(Overend, 2012: 53). T. Sokol claims that a tour guide “must be of high personal culture, erudite and possess the broad world outlook” (Sokol, 2006: 183). These definitions point out that a tour guide is responsible for directing and leading tourists on a tour or sight seeing. The World Federation of Tourist Guide Association (2005) defines the tour guide as a person who guides visitors in the language of their choice and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area. Summing up the given interpretations of the term “tour guide”, we conclude that *a tour guide* is a qualified professional of high culture who possesses the profound knowledge of the guided destination, foreign language proficiency and is skilled at directing and leading tourists on a sightseeing area.

In our study we widely use the term “professionalism”, which is clarified as the acquired in the process of training and practical activity ability to competent performance of working functions; skill level in a certain kind of activity, which corresponds to the level of complexity of the tasks performed”(Merriam-Webster, 1997). The professionalism of tour guides consists of certain aspects, the interpretation of which is analysed in our study.

To serve the tourists well, language plays an important role in order to conduct communication. It is believed that *communication skill* is greatly an important element of tourism and hospitality industry. Good tour guides have to be knowledgeable and resourceful, and they have to knowhow to communicate efficiently and effectively. In addition, they should be skillful at communicating because they are the most valuable assets in tourism companies. In many ways, a guide is the “façade” of a business or company (O’Brien, Ham, 2012).

Professional tourist guides not only guide local tourists of their own nationality but also guide

tourists who come from different countries. For this reason, they are expected to be fluent in at least one *foreign language* and speak it efficiently. Because, a tourist guide is the person who guides visitors in the language of their choice at the destination. Therefore, knowledge of a foreign language is of great importance to communicate effectively and transmit the information correctly to foreign visitors (Iriguler, Guler, 2016). According to the European Reference Framework communication in foreign languages is one of the key competencies (ERF, 1986). It consists in the ability to understand spoken messages, to initiate, sustain and conclude conversations and to read, understand and produce texts appropriate to one's individual needs. A positive attitude involves the appreciation of cultural diversity and an interesting and curiosity about languages and intercultural communication.

In the process of gaining education it is not sufficient to possess the knowledge, the ability to effectively communicate that knowledge will ultimately determine the success of the tour guide. *Effective communication* can be highly persuasive, demonstrate leadership and organization, and give clarity to complex issues. According to O'Brien and Ham the reality is that "effective communication is a learned skill that requires significant preparation and practice". The scientists state that a tour guide must learn to engage the audience not to lose their attention. Tour guides must make their presentations relevant to their audience so that they care, or can relate, and they must be organized so that they can efficiently communicate in very limited increments of time. The guides can provoke thought and interesting their guests which would "stay with them long after they go home" (O'Brien, Ham, 2012).

Much attention in the formation of tourist guide's professionalism is devoted to the *presentation skills*. In training successful guides, course lectures and activities focus on how to effectively present rather than memorize information. Training activities relevant to learning effective presentation skills such as body positioning, eye contact, tone, gestures etc. are the inseparable part of the acting mastery. "You can have all the knowledge in the world, but if you can't deliver that knowledge that is the problem" (Qwynne, 2016). Mossberg suggested that professionals in creative industries, such as actors trained in performance, could be useful in roles as educators, entertainers and value creators, and this may well be true of future tour guides (Mossberg, 1995).

T. Sokol emphasises the fact that a tour guide must possess the ability to persuade, based on the

profound personal confidence, logics, evidential strength, knowledge of the auditorium, culture of speech, knowledge of the oratory. The *oratory or public speaking* comprises the ability to structure the excursion material, message it to the listeners perfectly clear for comprehension by using verbal and non-verbal means of communication. The oratory is characterized by the richness of a guide's vocabulary; the correct use of word stress; grammar constructions; the proper choice of style; good pronunciation; artistic imagery – usage of various distinct language instruments: synonyms, epithets, metaphors, statements, idioms and proverbs; the avoidance of filler words. Non-verbal communication of a tour guide consists in the usage of body language including body posture, hand movements, gestures, facial expressions, skin coloring, usage of space and have a strong effect on effective communication. Tourist guides can use body language to make a positive impact and also understand group members better with deciphering their body language. It helps adapting to social environment better and read people easily (Iriguler, Guler, 2016).

In our study of tour guide's professionalism much attention is devoted to the development of *leadership* qualities of the personality. Having analyzed the theory of transformational leadership (developed by Bass in 1985), we view effective leadership as a process that causes change and transformation of the person with in followers, causing them to achieve extraordinary out comes and be come leaders in their own right. According to the theory, leadership results in the development of four components – idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Northouse, 2007), which are inseparable in the formation of the leading quality of a tour guide.

Idealized influence is a transformational leader's ability to be a role model and gain the respect, admiration, and trust of his or her followers. Followers of ten view their leader so highly that they wish to emulate her or him (Bass, 1985). The future tour guides are influenced by their instructors-teachers at the classes of excursion disciplines.

Intellectual stimulation is a leader's ability to get followers to recognize their own values and beliefs' through the emphasis of problem solving skills and intelligent, rational thought. This is done by encouraging creativity and novel ways of completing tasks (Bass, 1985). This occurred when instructors encourage students to experiment and find their own unique guiding style.

Individualized consideration is a leader's ability to provide a supportive environment that meets the

unique needs of his or her followers by opening lines of communication (Bass, 1985).

Inspirational motivation is a leader's ability to inspire and motivate her or his followers through the use of examples, symbols, emotional appeals, and/or clearly communicated expectations (Bass, 1985). Indeed, inspiring passion and motivating future guides are the goal of training.

Transformational leaders exhibit many of the characteristics of an ideal tour guide including charisma, confidence, commitment to values, strong communication skills, role modeling, as well as the ability to influence others, satisfy their needs, arouse motivation, and articulate high expectations (Northouse, 2007). In the process of training, the future tourist guides will gain and practice their leadership skills which they can successfully demonstrate at each guided tour.

The activity of a tour guide combines the following pedagogical *methods of information presentation* which encourage, stimulate and influence the cognition of the listeners. In our research we transfer certain methods into the professional activity performed by the tour guides. Among the methods of intensifying cognitive activity in the process of the excursion the following ones are widely used:

- the method of creating an artistic image – creating a certain picture while giving an excursion;
- the method of personification (complicity) – the tour guide makes the trippers feel as if they were the participants or observers of the described actions;
- the method of analogy (associations) – the trippers compare the objects to the ones they have previously seen by recalling its image;
- the question and answer method – mostly rhetorical questions which stimulate the trippers to reflect upon the problem;
- the method of a dialogue – the possibility for the trippers to express their opinion concerning the question asked and, thus, being involved into the problem;
- the method of material novelty which activates the trippers' attention by the singularity of the information;
- the problematic situation method characterized by the possibility to solve the problem individually or with the help of the tour guide;
- the method of shifting attention from one object or topic to an other one, which results in refreshing the trippers' attention;
- the method of lyrical digression – presenting a funny joke by the guide concerning the topic of the tour (with the sense of proportion);
- the personal experience method – sharing interesting and convincing guide's life facts;

– method of direct attention attraction – the guide's address to the trippers with the demand to focus on his narration (Sokol, 2006: 186).

All the methods applied contribute to the formation of the tour guide's professionalism. By skillful usage of means of speech, knowledge and methods of information presentation, engaging the auditorium in common topic capture, the tour guide transforms the excursion process in to the creativity and art.

Tour guides in Ukraine are required to possess good knowledge of tourism product, interpersonal skills including English proficiency and the ability to offer quality services. Good interpersonal skills, mastering foreign languages and offering the quality standards are dependent on training.

The Faculty of Tourism, Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University provides new approaches and effective training of the future tourist guides. The objective of the training is to equip students with the ability to perform their professional activity with the foreign language proficiency; to develop interpersonal relationships in professional sphere; to master the technology of constructive dialogue; to form the ability to speak and to listen; to establish feedback in the communication process; to adjust to the listener through non-verbal communication; to develop skills to keep in mind several things at a time; to act while conversation with a quick reaction; to adapt easily to the interlocutors. Besides, much attention is devoted to the development of future tourist guides' leadership skills.

Conclusion. Having analyzed certain aspects of formation of tour guides' professionalism (communication skills, foreign language proficiency, presentation skills, oratory, transformational leadership), we have come to the **conclusion** that the profession of a tour guide is rich in job responsibilities on which service quality and customer satisfaction depend.

In addition, to achieve high level of professionalism the tour guides should: acquire growth of motivation; be always ready to develop themselves as professionals; stimulate for the society interest in their activity in order to increase the prestige of their profession.

The foreign visitors of Ukraine as a developing tourist destination tend to view the tour guides as the representatives of the country. Besides that, tour guides are responsible for recognizing the social environment, arranging transportation, interpreting, handling problems, insulating travelers from difficulties and making the environment safe for tourists because they act as "intermediaries" between tourists and "the unknown". Thus, tour guides have important roles in tourism on which our further research will be based.

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