

National characteristics of training of future specialists of tourist support (guides-guides) in Ukraine

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Abstract. This paper presents materials on the national characteristics of professional training of future specialists of tourist support (tour guides, excursion guides) in the system of tourism education. Excursion activity is considered as a special type of professional activity, which requires a peculiar type of personality. The author explores historical prerequisites for emergence of excursion activity, as well as selected provisions of the Law of Ukraine "On Tourism" concerning the process of training of certain categories of specialists of tourist support (tour guides). The main provisions of the state standard of Ukraine for training of excursion guides, as well as the current realities of training tourist support specialists in Ukraine are highlighted.

Keywords: *specialists of tourist support, tour/excursion guide, excursion, courses for tour/excursion guides, tourism.*

Currently, at the time of transition from conveyor to differentiated tourism, a shift from producer market to consumer market has been made. Needs and demands have changed, from the impersonal mass tourism transformed to meet the needs of individuals with his various requests. Changes and new requirements towards excursion activities have been made. Tour operators and excursion guides who create a tour product must now have their original brand of product.

Taking into account consumer demand and differentiation of services, different types of tourist-excursion products are created, including original and specialized excursions. The development of new routes leads to emergence of new sightseeing facilities, a product variety that requires the competitiveness of the tourist support specialists.

Nowadays excursion activity is considered as a special type of professional activity, which requires a particular model of personality, an individual with specific interests, inclinations and abilities, a certain combination of interpersonal, psychophysiological and physical features. The greatest professional asset for a future guide is having personal qualities related to understanding the inner world of people and humane treatment of others [2].

The programs of different systems of training specialists in the field of the excursion activity used today, as well as the content and normative bases of the processes of professional training do not fully reflect the demands of tourist excursion activity in practice. This exacerbates the problem of creating a professionally-oriented pedagogical process that ensures the transfer of modern professional knowledge, skills and abilities in the field of organization and management of excursion activities. It is necessary to develop a multi-level system of professional education - pre-university, university and post-university training, professional development systems for teachers and employees of the tourism industry with specialization-based emphasis of professional training for specialists in tourist support (tour/excursion guides). All of the above determined the choice of problem and topic of our study.

An analysis of recent publications on this topic showed that very few researchers have recently been looking into the process of training of tour guides (excursion guides). Namely, theoretical bases of tourist-excursion activity, carried out taking into account the experience of development of national tourism, local history and excursion activity, were considered in the works by A. Gerdt, A. Sachs, B. Raykov and others. Issues of content development and teaching methods for professional tour guides are presented in the works of Yu. Kirimov, L. Chudin, O. Smirnov and others. The basic directions of training of specialists of tourist support (tour-excursion guides) are fully or partially reflected in the scientific research of a number of authors such as Ya. Gavrylova, L. Kurylo, Ie. Kazmina,

I. Moshkova, O. Krasnyuk. Also, pedagogical research on the problems of content formation in professional education in the field of excursion activity were done by such national researchers as V. Zholdak, A. Novikov, Ie. Lytvynov, B. Smirnov and others. However, a complete and unified presentation with the analysis and experimental substantiation of the content and structure of training of future specialists of tourist support (tour/excursion guides) and ways to overcome the mentioned challenges in our country has not yet been created.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the national characteristics of training future tourist support specialists (tour/excursion guides) in Ukraine.

Historically excursion activities emerged upon the rise of trade in services. Literary evidence of excursion activity in national history appears in the 18th - 18th centuries. It can be assumed that state regulation of excursion activities begins with the Recommendation of the Ministry of National Education on the use of excursions in the educational process made at the end of the 19th century. Later, in the 20th century, the legal framework was created in our country for excursion work in the conditions of the command administrative planning system of the economy. Since 1991 the regulatory framework for excursion work has been gradually transformed according to the conditions of the new market.

In September 1995 the Law on Tourism was adopted in Ukraine, which clearly states that tour guides, excursion guides, sports instructors, stewards and other specialists in tourist support are physical persons who carry out activities related to tourist support, except for persons working in the respective positions at enterprises, institutions, organizations which the demonstrated objects belong to or which serve the facilities. The list of positions of specialists of tourist support and the qualification requirements for each of them are determined by the central executive body, which ensures the formation of state policy in the field of tourism, in agreement with the central body of executive power, which ensures the formation of state policy in the sphere of labor relations [3].

Furthermore, in one of the articles of the Law of Ukraine "On Tourism" it is stated that training of certain categories of specialists of tourist support (guides-translators, tour guides, sports instructors, stewards etc.), which do not require citizens to obtain vocational-technical or higher education with a qualification according to certain educational-qualification level, can be carried out in the prescribed manner by legal or natural persons. The central executive body, which ensures the formation of state policy in the field of tourism and resorts, participates in the preparation of curricula and training programs for professionals in the field of tourism, their vocational training, retraining and advanced training [3].

Any profession is a type of work that requires certain skills of the person. This knowledge and skills are formed through general or special education, as well as during the daily practical activity of the employee.

Until recently (late 60-ies), working as a guide in our country was professional, it was a kind of amateur classes for groups of enthusiasts. The duties of the tour guide were performed by specialists of different fields of knowledge without leaving their main activity (educators, researchers at museums, institutes, etc.). However, even at that time this work was beginning to take on professional features.

The emergence of a new profession is linked to the measures taken by the governing bodies in 1969 to develop tourism and excursion in the country. Changing the functions of the excursions, transforming them from a form of recreation into a form of cultural and educational work in labor collectives, at the place of residence of workers and with tourists, in a large branch of public services contributed to expansion of the role of tour guides and further formation of a new specialty.

An excursion guide, who in 1940 was identified as the leader of the tour, and in the museums - an employee who shows the exhibited items and gives the necessary explanations, in the 1970s became one of those entrusted with transmitting knowledge to people, a guide came to be considered as a teacher and an educator. The employees of travel and excursions agencies, state and departmental museums, permanent exhibitions, art galleries, organizations such as "Sputnik", "Inturist", Ministry of Education, which offered excursions with the display of monuments, landmarks, museum exhibitions and more, were called excursion guides.

The title "excursion guide" was given to the employees of the above-mentioned organizations, who had the appropriate education, were trained in special courses or independently fulfilled all the requirements for persons who completed the courses for guides. Requirements for tour guide were determined by the "manual for the tour guide of tour/excursion organization", which was approved in 1977. By the early 1990-ies several thousand tour guides worked or collaborated on the rights of part time workers at tour agencies across the country. A guide became the central figure of excursion work.

In 2007, the State Standard for Vocational and Technical Education was developed and approved for training (professional development) of workers in the profession "Guide" in accordance with the decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Law of Ukraine "On Vocational Education". It was obligatory to follow the Standard for all vocational-technical educational institutions, enterprises, institutions and organizations that carried out training (advanced training) of skilled workers, regardless of their subordination and form of ownership. According to this Standard qualification requirements were developed for "tour /excursion guide". The guide should know: the legislation of Ukraine on tourism, other regulations of executive bodies in this field, the method of preparation and conduct of excursions; the content, routes and topics of excursions, the order of filing of documents for excursion service [1].

The guides' tasks and duties according to the standard were defined as follows: performs work related to the provision of excursion services within the domestic, mass and health and sports tourism while providing services for domestic tourists in Ukraine, acts in accordance with the legislation of Ukraine on tourism and other regulatory acts of executive bodies in this field; is a representative of a tourist activity organization and acts on its behalf, carrying out the assigned duties in regards to the excursion activity. A guide conducts excursions that have a general information direction; files appropriate reports; prepares individual texts of excursions in accordance with the control texts and methodological guidance; provides information and advertising, organizational and other services to the participants of the tour or excursion within the framework of the agreement on the provision of tourist services; attracts tourists to a healthy

way of life, rational use of leisure time, meaningful leisure activities, encourages to get acquainted with the monuments of historical and cultural heritage, the natural environment, prominent places of modernity [1].

The standard also defines general professional requirements towards tour guides. In addition to the work included in the relevant section of the qualification characteristics of the professions, all workers should:

- rationally and efficiently organize work in the workplace;
- adhere to the norms of technological process;
- to not allow defects in work;
- to know and comply with the requirements of regulations on occupational safety and environment protection, adhere to the rules, methods and techniques of safe work;
- use, if necessary, means of preventing and eliminating natural and unforeseen negative phenomena (fires, accidents, floods etc.);
- to know information technologies.

But in Ukraine today, despite the existing state standards for specialized training and the legislative framework that regulates the activities of tourist support specialists (tour/excursion guides), the situation with their training is completely ambiguous.

First, some experts believe that no special training for guides is needed. After all, even in the State Directory of Qualification Characteristics of the professions it is stated that solely field training is enough to be able to conduct excursions. Many routes in almost all cities of Ukraine are run successfully by experts (who have taken no courses) who love and know their region, its history, traditions and customs. Secondly, other experts believe that every guide is required to undergo an appropriate training. It will allow to legalize their activity as a private enterprise and in the future, they would expect a decent pension. In addition, the excursion should be of great educational importance, and, like any teacher, the guide should not do without education, taking special courses and constant training.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the level of excursion services was quite high. So was the level of training system for human resources in the field. In the late 1980s, almost 4,500 officially approved excursion routes operated in Ukraine. And tourist support specialists (tour guides) from all over Ukraine as well as other countries took courses of advanced training for employees of tourist-excursion organizations and enhanced their professional qualification [5].

After 1991 the situation changed dramatically. Due to the crisis in the tourism sphere, tourism market has completely reoriented itself to organization of foreign trips, the profession of a tour guide has become unnecessary and was not in demand.

Fortunately, nowadays domestic tourism is reviving at a rather fast pace: there is a mass of people wishing to visit different corners of our country, and many foreign guests do not mind to get acquainted with the monuments of history and culture, nature reserves of Ukraine. Although the popularity of world-renowned landmarks is a long way from us, excursion work is gaining interest again.

In Ukraine, most of all in large cities, the training and retraining courses for excursion workers are being revived. Most courses are for 3-4 months, and classes are held 2-3 times a week in the evening, all courses are paid. Some of them accept only candidates with a university degree or current students of HEIs. While there are offers for those who have only secondary education, as the State Classifier of Occupations attributes a guide to working specialty, which does not require higher education.

To become a professional tour guide, an individual will need a serious amount of knowledge and skills, so training in the courses includes many subjects, the main among them is "Methodology and Practice of Excursion Activities". Much attention is paid to history and local history, as well as the study of all the normative documents used in the work of a tour guide or tour

company providing excursion services. On the basis of the Interstate standard "Tourist-excursion service" [4], experts have provided recommendations for development of methodological documentation for each topic of the excursion such as: technological map, control text, route scheme and "guidebook" for the guide. These guidelines be applied while designing any excursion.

In any training course for specialists in tourist support (tour guides), practical training is playing a great role. Initially, the course instructors conduct a demonstration tour with methodological highlights and comments. And then the listeners themselves prepare the excursion pieces, carefully working them out in the classrooms and then on the actual routes. During the course of study, thematic excursions are developed, and after the completion of the study an examination of the theoretical part of the course is taken and the prepared excursions on real routes are defended. Graduates are issued state certificates and certificates with the qualification "excursion/tour guide".

There are some other nuances in the preparation of guides, namely the development of communication skills and a culture of speech. A guide should be both a psychologist and a teacher, because often enough he/she has to work not only with a homogeneous team, but also with a completely diverse audience. In such cases, the ability to apply mimics and gestures, oratory, and the ability to resolve any conflict situations will be useful.

To teach all the intricacies of this profession is a difficult task, so almost all existing training courses for tour guides (excursion guides) are taught by teachers who have received special training and have extensive experience in conducting excursions and tourist support on real tourist routes. The best guides in their regions are also involved in teaching.

Becoming a tour guide by simply reading the textbook is very difficult, as there are so many nuances of this profession to learn about that can only be learned by a professional teacher. Many skills come only with experience, because even a candidate of historical sciences, who knows the history of certain

region and Ukraine perfectly, without mastering the methods of designing and conducting an excursion can never become a good tour guide.

This profession requires continuous learning and self-improvement. Reading literature, studying archival materials, supplementing excursion texts with new facts and illustrative material should become an indispensable prerequisite for the professional growth of every specialist in tourist support sphere.

Summarizing all of the above, we can conclude that the concepts explores in this paper, namely the essence and content of modern excursion activity under transition of the country to the market mechanism of economic development are of particular importance, as the crisis phenomena have negative impact on the development of mass tourism and basic training systems and professional development of human resources in the sphere of tourism. The disadvantage of training professional guides (tour guides, excursion guides) in Ukraine is the slow formation of a basic training system for future specialists in tourist support, as well as the failure to comply with state standards in the process of the professional training. All of this has led to the demand for qualitatively different system of training guides.

It is also important to emphasize that today one of the most important tasks of the modern Ukrainian education system in the field of tourism should be the training of specialists of tourist support (tour guides, excursion guides) at the level of recognized world standards, which provides for solving several urgent problems related to improving the quality of education; involvement of experienced representatives of the tourism business in the process of training specialists, constant monitoring of human resources needs of the tourism market, expansion of international cooperation, etc. In this context, the study and creative use of foreign experience in training of specialists of tourist support (tour guides, excursion guides) can become an effective way of efficient development of the tourism industry on the territory of our country.

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