

**THE PROBLEM OF FORMING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE IN FUTURE
TOURISM SPECIALISTS IN TEACHING ENGLISH IN SCIENTIFIC AND
METHODOLOGICAL LITERATURE**

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Abstract: This article examines the issue of developing professional competence in future tourism specialists through English language teaching within the framework of scientific and methodological literature. The study analyzes modern pedagogical approaches, communicative methods, and competency-based education models aimed at improving learners' professional communication skills in the tourism sector. Particular attention is paid to the role of English as a tool for intercultural interaction, professional mobility, and international cooperation in tourism activities. The article also highlights the importance of integrating practical language tasks, authentic materials, and interactive technologies into the educational process. Based on the analysis of contemporary methodological sources, effective strategies for enhancing students' linguistic, communicative, and professional competencies are identified. The findings demonstrate that professionally oriented English language instruction contributes significantly to the formation of competitive and qualified tourism specialists in the global labor market.

Keywords: professional competence, tourism education, English language teaching, communicative competence, future tourism specialists, competency-based approach, intercultural communication, professional training, methodological approaches, tourism industry.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the rapid development of international tourism has significantly increased the demand for highly qualified specialists who possess not only professional knowledge in the field of tourism, but also advanced communicative competence in foreign languages, particularly English. English has become the dominant language of global communication in tourism, hospitality, international business, and intercultural interaction. Consequently, the process of teaching English to future tourism specialists has acquired strategic importance within higher education systems worldwide. Modern employers in the tourism sector expect graduates to demonstrate professional flexibility, intercultural awareness, communicative competence, and the ability to effectively interact with foreign tourists and international partners. The issue of forming professional competence among future tourism specialists during English language instruction has become one of the central topics in scientific and methodological literature. The concept of professional competence includes linguistic knowledge, communicative abilities, professional skills, sociocultural awareness, critical thinking, and practical readiness for professional activity. In tourism education, professional competence is directly connected with the ability to conduct negotiations, provide information services, solve communicative problems, organize intercultural communication, and maintain professional interaction in multilingual environments.

The modernization of educational systems and the implementation of competency-based approaches in higher education have intensified the search for innovative methods of foreign

language teaching. Traditional grammar-oriented instruction is no longer sufficient for preparing competitive tourism specialists. Instead, contemporary pedagogy emphasizes communicative, task-based, interactive, and professionally oriented teaching methods. These approaches aim to integrate language acquisition with professional training, thereby enabling students to apply English in real-life tourism situations. Scientific and methodological studies indicate that professionally oriented English language instruction contributes to the development of students' cognitive activity, communicative independence, and professional mobility. Researchers emphasize that tourism students require specialized vocabulary, practical communication skills, intercultural sensitivity, and the ability to function effectively in authentic communicative contexts. Therefore, English language teaching in tourism education should be based on real professional situations such as hotel reservations, tour guiding, airport communication, customer service, business correspondence, and intercultural negotiations.

In Uzbekistan, the growing integration into the international tourism market and the expansion of tourism infrastructure have created a strong need for specialists capable of communicating fluently in English. Government reforms aimed at developing tourism and improving foreign language education have further increased attention to the issue of professional competence formation. Universities and educational institutions are currently revising curricula and methodological approaches in order to align tourism education with international standards. Despite numerous studies devoted to communicative competence and foreign language teaching, the problem of developing professional competence among future tourism specialists remains insufficiently explored in terms of methodological integration, practical implementation, and competency assessment. Many educational programs still face difficulties related to limited authentic materials, insufficient practical training, low motivation, and the gap between theoretical knowledge and professional communication practice. The relevance of this research is determined by the necessity to improve the scientific and methodological foundations of English language teaching for tourism students and to identify effective pedagogical conditions for the formation of professional competence. The purpose of the study is to analyze scientific and methodological literature related to professionally oriented English language teaching in tourism education and to determine effective approaches that contribute to the formation of professional competence among future tourism specialists.

The objectives of the research include examining theoretical approaches to professional competence, analyzing methodological principles of English language instruction in tourism education, identifying effective communicative and interactive methods, and evaluating the role of professional orientation in language learning. The study also seeks to determine how modern pedagogical technologies can enhance students' readiness for professional activity in the tourism industry. The theoretical significance of the research lies in the systematization of scientific views on professional competence formation within tourism education. The practical significance is connected with the possibility of applying the proposed methodological approaches in higher educational institutions that prepare future tourism specialists. The research findings may contribute to improving the quality of English language instruction and increasing the professional competitiveness of graduates in the international tourism market.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

The issue of professional competence formation has been widely investigated in modern pedagogy, psychology, linguistics, and methodology. Scientific literature demonstrates that

competence-based education has become one of the leading paradigms in contemporary higher education. Researchers interpret professional competence as an integrated system of knowledge, skills, abilities, values, and personal qualities necessary for effective professional activity. Foreign scholars such as Richards, Hutchinson, Waters, Harmer, and Brown emphasize the importance of communicative and professionally oriented approaches in foreign language teaching. Hutchinson and Waters consider English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as a learner-centered approach that focuses on professional needs and authentic communication. Their theory highlights the necessity of integrating professional content into language instruction in order to increase students' motivation and practical readiness. Richards argues that communicative language teaching should prepare learners for real communicative situations rather than focusing exclusively on grammatical structures. According to his views, tourism students must develop practical speaking, listening, negotiation, and intercultural communication skills. Harmer also notes that interactive methods and collaborative learning environments significantly improve language acquisition and professional communication abilities. Modern scientific literature pays particular attention to intercultural communicative competence. Byram states that successful communication in tourism requires not only linguistic competence but also sociocultural awareness and intercultural sensitivity. Tourism specialists constantly interact with representatives of different cultures; therefore, cultural knowledge becomes an essential component of professional competence.

Researchers in tourism pedagogy emphasize that English language instruction should simulate authentic professional situations. Role plays, case studies, project-based learning, business simulations, and task-based activities are considered highly effective methods for developing professional competence. These methods help students overcome communicative barriers and improve their ability to solve professional problems in real contexts.

Uzbek scholars also contribute significantly to the study of competency-based education and foreign language methodology. National researchers underline the importance of integrating innovative technologies, digital resources, and communicative approaches into English language teaching. They emphasize that future tourism specialists should possess not only theoretical knowledge but also practical communication skills that correspond to international standards. The analysis of scientific and methodological literature demonstrates that professional competence consists of several interconnected components: linguistic competence, communicative competence, sociocultural competence, strategic competence, and professional competence. Linguistic competence includes vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and professional terminology. Communicative competence refers to the ability to effectively interact in various communicative situations. Sociocultural competence involves understanding cultural norms, traditions, and behavioral patterns. Strategic competence helps learners solve communication problems and adapt to professional situations. The methodological basis of the present research includes competency-based, communicative, intercultural, and professionally oriented approaches. The competency-based approach focuses on learning outcomes and practical readiness for professional activity. The communicative approach emphasizes meaningful interaction and authentic language use. The intercultural approach develops cultural awareness and tolerance, while the professionally oriented approach integrates tourism-related content into language instruction.

The research employs several scientific methods. Theoretical analysis was used to examine scientific and methodological literature related to tourism education and English language

teaching. Comparative analysis helped identify similarities and differences between various methodological approaches. Descriptive analysis was applied to systematize theoretical concepts and pedagogical principles. In addition, elements of observation and pedagogical interpretation were utilized to evaluate the effectiveness of communicative methods in tourism-oriented language teaching. The study also relies on the principles of student-centered education, according to which learners actively participate in the educational process and develop independent communicative abilities. Modern educational technologies, including multimedia tools, online resources, interactive platforms, and digital simulations, are considered important factors in improving professional competence formation. Special attention is devoted to authentic materials in English language teaching. Scientific literature indicates that authentic texts, videos, brochures, dialogues, and tourism advertisements significantly improve students' communicative preparedness and professional vocabulary acquisition. Authentic resources create realistic communicative conditions and increase students' motivation toward language learning.

Furthermore, researchers stress the importance of integrating all language skills into tourism education. Listening activities help students understand foreign tourists and professional conversations. Speaking activities improve oral communication and customer interaction. Reading develops the ability to process professional information, while writing enhances business correspondence and documentation skills. Thus, the analysis of scientific and methodological literature confirms that professionally oriented English language instruction plays a decisive role in the formation of professional competence among future tourism specialists. Effective integration of communicative methods, intercultural education, authentic materials, and interactive technologies contributes to the preparation of competitive specialists capable of functioning successfully in the global tourism industry.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis demonstrate that the formation of professional competence among future tourism specialists largely depends on the methodological organization of English language instruction. Scientific and methodological literature confirms that traditional teaching methods focused mainly on grammar translation are insufficient for preparing students for modern professional communication in tourism. Contemporary educational practice requires interactive, communicative, and professionally oriented approaches that develop practical language skills and professional readiness simultaneously. One of the major findings of the research is that communicative competence serves as the central component of professional competence in tourism education. Tourism specialists constantly interact with international tourists, business partners, hotel staff, transport services, and travel agencies. Therefore, students must develop the ability to communicate fluently, politely, and effectively in English within various professional situations. The analysis shows that students who participate in communicative activities such as role plays, discussions, simulations, and project work demonstrate higher levels of professional confidence and communicative flexibility.

Another important result concerns the role of professional vocabulary acquisition. Scientific literature emphasizes that tourism terminology differs considerably from general English vocabulary because it includes specialized lexical units related to hospitality, transportation, excursion services, reservation systems, tourism marketing, and intercultural communication. Effective teaching strategies include contextual vocabulary instruction, situational dialogues, authentic texts, and task-based learning activities. Such methods help students not only memorize professional terminology but also apply it appropriately in communicative situations.

The study also reveals that authentic materials significantly enhance students' professional competence. Authentic brochures, hotel websites, travel advertisements, booking forms, video presentations, and customer service dialogues create realistic communicative environments. Students working with authentic materials become more familiar with real professional language use and improve their listening comprehension, pronunciation, and sociocultural understanding.

An important aspect identified in the research is intercultural communicative competence. Tourism professionals frequently interact with representatives of different cultural backgrounds; therefore, misunderstandings caused by cultural differences may negatively influence communication quality. Scientific literature suggests that intercultural competence should be integrated into English language instruction through discussions of cultural norms, etiquette, traditions, values, and behavioral differences. The inclusion of intercultural topics improves students' tolerance, empathy, and communicative adaptability.

The results further indicate that digital technologies positively influence professional competence formation. Online learning platforms, virtual tourism simulations, multimedia presentations, mobile applications, and video conferencing tools increase students' motivation and provide opportunities for independent learning. Digital resources also facilitate access to authentic professional materials and real communicative situations. In modern tourism education, technology-enhanced language learning has become an essential component of methodological innovation.

The analysis shows that task-based learning is particularly effective in tourism-oriented English instruction. Tasks such as organizing tours, preparing travel itineraries, handling customer complaints, conducting hotel check-ins, and presenting tourism destinations develop both language proficiency and professional problem-solving skills. Students engaged in task-based activities demonstrate higher levels of communicative autonomy and practical readiness for professional activity. At the same time, the research identifies several challenges in the process of professional competence formation. One of the main problems is the insufficient integration between theoretical knowledge and practical communication activities. In some educational contexts, students possess grammatical knowledge but experience difficulties when communicating in authentic professional situations. Another challenge relates to limited access to modern authentic materials and digital technologies in certain educational institutions.

The literature also highlights motivational difficulties among students. Some learners perceive English language instruction as a purely academic subject rather than a professional necessity. Therefore, teachers should emphasize the practical importance of English for career development, international mobility, and employment opportunities in tourism. Professionally oriented tasks and authentic communication activities help increase students' motivation and engagement. Another issue concerns teacher preparedness. Effective implementation of communicative and professionally oriented approaches requires teachers to possess not only linguistic competence but also methodological flexibility and knowledge of tourism-specific content. Consequently, teacher professional development becomes an important factor in improving tourism education quality. The discussion confirms that competency-based education creates favorable conditions for integrating language learning with professional preparation. Unlike traditional knowledge-centered models, competency-based instruction focuses on practical outcomes and students' readiness for real professional activity. This approach aligns

with the modern requirements of the tourism industry, where communication skills, adaptability, intercultural awareness, and problem-solving abilities are highly valued.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that professionally oriented English language teaching contributes significantly to the formation of professional competence among future tourism specialists. Effective methodology should combine communicative interaction, authentic materials, digital technologies, intercultural education, and task-based learning in order to prepare competitive specialists capable of functioning successfully in international tourism environments.

CONCLUSION

The conducted research confirms that the problem of forming professional competence among future tourism specialists during English language instruction remains one of the most actual and significant issues in modern scientific and methodological literature. The growing globalization of tourism, expansion of international communication, and increasing professional demands require higher educational institutions to modernize language teaching methodologies and align them with contemporary competency-based educational standards. The analysis of scientific literature demonstrates that professional competence is a multidimensional phenomenon that includes linguistic, communicative, sociocultural, intercultural, and professional components. Effective English language instruction for tourism students should therefore move beyond traditional grammar-focused teaching and prioritize practical communication, authentic professional interaction, and real-life situational learning.

The research findings reveal that communicative and professionally oriented teaching approaches play a decisive role in preparing students for future professional activity. Interactive methods such as role plays, discussions, simulations, project-based learning, and task-oriented instruction significantly improve learners' communicative confidence, professional vocabulary acquisition, and problem-solving abilities. These approaches create favorable pedagogical conditions for integrating language knowledge with practical tourism competencies. The study also confirms the importance of authentic materials and digital technologies in tourism-oriented English language instruction. Authentic resources expose students to realistic professional communication and improve their understanding of tourism discourse. Modern digital tools increase learning motivation, support independent education, and provide access to international communicative environments.

Another important conclusion concerns the role of intercultural communicative competence. Since tourism specialists work in multicultural environments, they must possess tolerance, cultural awareness, flexibility, and the ability to communicate effectively with representatives of different nations and cultures. Intercultural education should therefore become an integral component of professional language training. At the same time, the research identifies several methodological and organizational challenges, including insufficient practical orientation of some educational programs, limited authentic resources, motivational difficulties, and the need for teacher professional development. Solving these problems requires systematic methodological improvement, curriculum modernization, and broader implementation of innovative pedagogical technologies.

In conclusion, professionally oriented English language teaching serves as an effective means of developing professional competence among future tourism specialists. The integration of communicative methodology, competency-based education, intercultural training, and innovative technologies contributes to preparing highly qualified, competitive, and professionally mobile specialists capable of meeting the demands of the global tourism industry. The research findings may be practically applied in higher educational institutions specializing in tourism education and may serve as a methodological basis for further scientific investigations in the field of professional foreign language teaching.

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