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BASIC PRINCIPLES OF CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONALLY-ORIENTED FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCY FORMATION

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The article suggests the definition of the continuous maritime education phenomenon and substantiates the basic didactic principles of the framework of foreign professionally-oriented language training of seafarers in the system of continuous education. It is determined that the leveled continuous professional training should be carried out in educational and industrial complexes which are in fact the system of interconnected educational establishments and industrial enterprises that pursue a common aim.

It has been proved that the system of professionally-oriented foreign language competency formation of future seafarers can gain the qualities of integrity and continuity only under the condition that it is carried out on all basic stages of education in constant coordination: pre-professional training (Professional Maritime Lyceum), professional training (Maritime Specialized College and/or Maritime Academy), higher professional education (Maritime Academy) and post-graduate education (advanced training on the basis of training centers for seafarers). The process of integral professionally-oriented foreign language training of seafarers design must be grounded on the principles of succession and consistency, the provision of strict coordination of the educational process on all levels of education.

Key words: continuous education, professionally-oriented foreign language training, education and industrial complex, integration, coordination, succession.

Introduction. The key priority of the high school educational process nowadays is the formation of highly qualified, competent, competitive and responsive specialist who complies with the tough requirements of the work-place which, in turn, explains for the fact that the dynamic changes of the employment market influence greatly the development of the professional education system, its improvement and renovation and the quality of future specialists training. The final aim of the educational activity, irrespective of its content and specialization, is the complete mastery of competency, theoretical knowledge and practical skills as well as the formation of professionally-oriented, social and personal features required for the successful career of a future specialist. The rapid development of the information society demands for the highly qualified personnel able to pursue life-long learning, improvement and development in compliance with the latest requirement of this or that professional sphere. All of the above mentioned allows for the conclusion that the crucial principles to be used as the grounds for the contemporary high school methodology should be the principles of full development of the human personality, informatization, fundamentalization, succession and continuity of knowledge gaining. The provision of conditions for the continuous professional education system functioning becomes the acute need of today and, as such, the key component of the state policy in the sphere of high education [11, 305]. At the present moment there is a need to develop specific unified strategy for the new high education paradigm and model design which will provide for the succession in the training process of specialists of different education

and qualification levels [4, 33] by means of organizational and content integrity and consistency of all levels of professional training.

One of the first scientists who substantiated the conceptual basics of the national leveled system of professional training in higher educational establishments was A. Lihotskyi. He believed that the theoretical and methodological grounds for the professional training of specialists with higher education was the model of the integral leveled educational system which has its own content, multidimensional structure that provide for its implementation and further development in some social and cultural environment [7]. As suggested by S. Mamrych, it would make sense to implement the leveled professional training on the basis of educational – scientific and industrial complexes which are the systems of interrelated educational establishments, scientific institutions and industrial enterprises and organizations that pursue one common goal [8, 224–225].

I. Ziaziun believes that it is quite timely today to create the networks of educational establishments which must provide for the connection and succession of curricula, which are able to satisfy the public needs and requirements. In other words, there should be some kind of a specific educational environment created [3, 16-17]. Generally speaking, the thorough analysis of higher education development tendencies proves there is the active search of modern organizational forms of educational and academic process which would be capable to guarantee the implementation of continuous education [1, 76].

Having analyzed the scientific research works and their results presented by M. Bratko [1], O. Hulai [2], I. Ziaziun [3], L. Kaidalova [5], L. Kravchenko [6], A. Lihotskyi [7], O. Pavlenko [10], I. Pecheranskyi [12], L. Khoruzha [13] and others, which are aimed at the continuous professional education problems solving, we have come to the conclusion that the issues of the system of continuous professional training of future

seafarers in general and the issue of the continuous professionally-oriented foreign language training of specialists for maritime industry in particular have not been studied and worked out at the appropriate level so still many issues are left undiscovered.

The article's objective and tasks. The article is aimed at defining the phenomenon of continuous maritime education and substantiating the basic didactic principles of the framework of continuous professionally-oriented foreign language training of maritime industry specialists. The task of the article is to explain the conditions under which the system of continuous professional education will be implemented in efficient way within the educational and industrial complex "Professional Maritime Lyceum – Maritime Specialized College – Maritime Academy".

Main material. The continuous maritime education is defined as the systematic educational activity aimed at the formation and deepening of knowledge, skills and competencies in the sphere of maritime vehicle handling in different types of educational establishments and by means of self-education. We claim it to be the integral formal component of continuous education system in general which appears to be a specifically organized system of professional training, advanced training and postgraduate training of higher education seekers with the further employment in the sphere of maritime industry.

Continuous maritime professional training involves the procedure of gaining different education qualifical levels at the certain stages (levels) of professional and higher education as the result of mastering the specific level of competencies stipulated as required for carrying out the professional duties. It is crucial to understand that it is not for the number of different maritime educational establishments but rather for the unified system within which the integral cooperation and interrelation of the educational establishments of different levels is provided.

The professional training of maritime industry specialists is viewed in the paper as the process of gradual, stage by stage personality development of future specialist, who is competent, able to carry out the assigned professional tasks and duties using the knowledge, skills and competencies and taking into consideration the peculiar features of working conditions in the mixed multilingual crews. As the result of such leveled gradual professional training there should be formed the readiness to perform the professional activity at a certain level of responsibility: ratings (support level), officers (operational level) and senior officers (managerial level). The opportunity to advance from one stage to another and gain certain education qualification level within the wanted specialization in compliance with the students' personal needs and abilities is provided by the transition to the dynamic leveled professional training of future seafarers in the framework of the integral system of continuous maritime professional education. We argue that the formation and the development professionally-oriented foreign language communicative competency must be done within the framework of the unified integral pedagogical process aimed at the achieving of a shared educational objective by means of coordinated and coherent methods and forms at all stages of the educational process.

Pre-professional and professional educational establishments integration into a single unified complex allows for the increase of the professional training efficiency and for the improvement of the learning outcomes only under the condition that the consistency of the academic content will be provided at all stages of professional training and education, that the organizational forms and teaching methods will be coordinated as it will enable the professional lyceums graduates to adapt faster to the higher education establishment learning environment [9, 671]. Our practical teaching experience shows that the cadets who enter the second course of

the Bachelor program in Maritime Academy or enter the shortened program course in Specialized Maritime College after Professional Maritime Lyceum do not have any difficulties in complying with the requirements as for the professionally-oriented foreign language skills. Moreover, they demonstrate even a better mastery of the practical professionally-oriented communicative competency than the students who entered the Academy straight after school as they have already have some seagoing experience onboard merchant vessel where they had an opportunity to improve their practical foreign language communicative skills within the multilingual crews.

Having taken the major national and world-wide scientific research results in the sphere of higher education, the basic legislative acts and documents concerning higher education, key ideas of Bologna Declaration as a basis and taken into consideration all of the above mentioned requirements to the professionally-oriented foreign language training of future seafarers we have substantiated the following basic ***didactic principles*** of the framework of foreign professionally-oriented language training of seafarers in the system of continuous education:

1. The system of professionally-oriented foreign language training of future seafarers gains the features of continuity and integrity only under the condition that it is carried out at the basic levels of education: pre-professional training (Professional Maritime Lyceum), professional training (Specialized Maritime College and/or Maritime Academy), higher professional education (Maritime Academy) and further professional advanced training (Specialized training centers for seafarers). We argue that the professional competency formation of future seafarers can become the most efficient only under the condition of the leveled education system implementation within which students can acquire the required education qualifical levels stage by stage in the lyceum, college and then

academy. Such gradual process of professional competency formation complies completely with the prescribed minimum standards and requirements to seafarers as for the level of their skills and abilities according to the level of their operation as stipulated by the STCW Code. This will also enable the combination of the theoretical professional training at the corresponding level with the possibility to gain some practical experience as the higher education seeks will already be provided with the necessary documents certifying their skills at a certain education qualifical level. Thus, the creation of the conditions for the gradual stage by stage advancement on the way of professionally-oriented foreign language competency formation will provide for the continuity of the professional training which is nowadays considered to be the fundamental principle of its development.

2. The integrity of the continuous education system is provided by the means of the functional coordination of individual levels. This means that the professional training of maritime industry specialist requires the involvement of the system approach not only at each stage of the continuous education but also in term of creating unified system approach to the formation of the professionally-oriented foreign language communicative competency within the pedagogical chain: maritime lyceum – maritime college – maritime academy. To achieve this goal it is necessary to design the integral teaching process in the educational and industrial complex on the basis of consistency and succession principles taking into consideration the modern requirements and development tendencies of the maritime industry. It is also extremely important to arrange the clear system of teaching process coordination at different levels of education which should function as the extension of the previous level and provide the preparation for further ones. Pre-professional training within this system should acquire its own peculiar features determined by the peculiarities of

the further professional activity. It should promote the formation and development of the professional interest, motivation and psychological readiness for the further professional development.

3. To provide for the integral unity and functioning of the continuous professional education system it is crucial to integrate all curricula and syllabi at all stages of the leveled professional training as it will ensure the improvement of the education quality by means of the logical and consistent educational content establishment. For that purpose it is recommended to develop such syllabi for the course of “Maritime English” taught in the Professional Maritime Lyceum for the students of all specializations which will comply with the Maritime English syllabi in Specialized Maritime College and Maritime Academy.

4. The quality of Maritime English teaching and learning at each stage of education depends greatly on the design and use of the integral and systematically arranged complex of the teaching and learning support materials. The elements of the complex should be developed in compliance with the key principles of the commonly accepted for all stages approach (in our case we argue that the best approach for the professionally-oriented foreign language competency formation is the communicative and competency-based approach) which is accompanied by the implementation of the unified system of forms, methods and teaching technologies. Pre-professional training in maritime lyceum, which is claimed to be an important element of the whole system of continuous education, is aimed at adaptation of students to the organizational forms and teaching methods used in maritime college and/or maritime academy later.

5. The conditions of the employment market nowadays demand a specialist to have deep and profound theoretical knowledge as well as to possess the ability to apply them independently in dynamic changing situations. Thus, we claim that the crucial didactic principle for the efficiency

of the continuous professional training system functioning is the demand to develop such important personal qualities as the ability to learn, to gain new knowledge and skills in independent and consistent way, to analyze and apply the received information and knowledge in practical situations. In the framework of our conceptual model of the continuous professional education future maritime industry specialists are viewed as personalities capable of self-development, creativity, self-management and highly efficient professional activity. It is assumed that they have a sense of social and personal responsibility. That is why the priority in the process of professionally-oriented communicative competency formation should be given to the active learning strategies which are aimed at the development of the reflective abilities, critical thinking, conscious motivation for self-improvement and professional growth demanded by the objective living and working conditions.

6. The maritime English teachers are faced the task to form the skills of every-day English usage as well as, what is more important, *professionally-oriented* communicative competence of the future maritime industry specialist. Thus, we name the demand to integrate professional knowledge into the course of English teaching starting from the earliest stage of pre-professional training in professional maritime lyceum as another crucial didactic principle of the efficient continuous professionally-oriented foreign language training. This, in turn, demands the English language teachers to be ready to work under the new specific conditions and to demonstrate high level of professional competence irrespective of the educational level they teach at. This didactic principle provokes the need for the constant pedagogical mastery improvement as well as constant personal advancement and updating of professional knowledge in a specific maritime specialization (navigation, engineering, electrical-engineering and the like). The efficiency of the process of professionally-oriented communicative

competency formation depends immediately on the professional competence of teachers, the level of their professional knowledge and their readiness to develop and improve constantly.

Conclusions and prospects. So, summing up all of the above mentioned, we claim that higher educational institution nowadays has to respond the changes and the new requirements of the day, to become aware of the need of transiting into the open systems mode, search for new, efficient teaching-learning methods and forms and to actively engaged in the process of pre-professional training of future maritime industry specialists. The modern framework of the continuous professionally-oriented foreign language training of seafarers is proved to be implemented efficiently only under the condition of pursuing the key conceptual and didactic principles which have been suggested in the paper on the basis of thorough analysis of scientific and pedagogical research and our own practical teaching experience. Because the main condition of the efficient implementation of the continuous professionally-oriented foreign language training was suggested in the paper to be the functioning of an educational and industrial complex, which can guarantee the active participation of an educational establishment of any level in the process of continuous professional training as the structural element, we intend to continue the research and are aimed at defining the theoretical and methodological grounds for the continuous professionally-oriented foreign language training system framework. We are intended to describe in detail the arrangement and functional peculiarities of educational and industrial complex “Professional Maritime Lyceum – Specialized Maritime College – Kherson State Maritime Academy”.

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