# MULTIPLE ROLE COMBINATION IN THE PROFESSION OF A TOUR GUIDE ПОЄДНАННЯ РІЗНОМАНІТНИХ РОЛЕЙ У ПРОФЕСІЇ ТУРИСТИЧНОГО ГІДА

The profession of a tour guide is presently of high demand and importance in tourism industry. The problem of combination of multiple tour guides' roles has received little attention from the tourism academic community.

Such features as professionalism, progressiveness, communicativeness, competitiveness are combined in the career of a tour guide as a representative of the perspective and well-developed industry of the world.

As far as tour guides are viewed as the representatives of the country, they act as "intermediaries" between tourists and "the unknown". The socio-cultural function of tourism performed by a tour guide enriches a person, plays an important role in the formation of one's worldview, influences the development of human personality. In the article the term "role" is defined and the tour guide's role components are viewed.

A highly-skilled tour guide shows accurate and significant knowledge, providing the engaging experience for tourists. We distinguish such professional qualities, abilities, skills as: strong empathy and understanding, entertaining and enthusiastic personality, focus on building friendly relationship, flexibility, punctuality, eagerness to learn and willingness to teach others, professionalism, ability to communicate effectively, creativity, ability to improvise and adapt, sense of humour, storytelling, actor's skills and oratory.

The knowledge of the profession of a tour guide is divided into: basic subjects' knowledge, foreign language knowledge, first-aid knowledge and intercultural knowledge. Knowledgeable tour guides who are able to communicate effectively and transmit the information correctly to foreign visitors, combine the basic, intercultural and first-aid knowledge make a trip insightful and unforgettable.

The question of combining different roles in the profession of a tour guide is raised. The list of various roles performed by the tour guide includes: an actor, an ambassador, a buffer, a caretaker, a catalyst, a culture broker, an information-giver, an intermediary, an interpreter/translator, a leader, a mediator, an organiser, a salesperson, a shaman, a teacher, etc.

Much attention is devoted to the development of leadership qualities of the tour guide's personality. As a tour leader, the guide usually has good general knowledge of the local area, particularly from a cultural point of view, escorts tourists on the bus, gives commentary on the way, arranges meeting times and places, coordinates with museums, restaurants, and drivers. Being the tour group's leader, tour guide performs his/her most essential role – taking responsibility.

The proper description and characterizing of various roles performed by a tour guide results in better understanding of a tour guide's professional responsibilities and job importance.

**Key words:** tour guide, professional role, characteristics, abilities, skills, knowledge.

Професія туристичного гіда нині користується популярністю та затребуваністю в туристичній галузі. Проблема поєднання різноманітних ролей у професії туристичного гіда сьогодні не досить досліджена науковцями.

Такі риси, як професіоналізм, прогресивність, комунікативність, конкурентоспроможність, поєднуються у професії туристичного гіда як представника перспективної й добре розвиненої індустрії.

Оскільки туристичного гіда розглядають як представника країни, він є «посередником» між туристами та «невідомим». Соціокультурна функція туризму, яку виконує туристичний гід, збагачує людину, відіграє важливу роль у формуванні її світогляду, впливає на розвиток людської особистості.

У статті надано визначення терміна «роль» та розглянуто рольові компоненти туристичного гіда.

Висококваліфікований туристичний гід демонструє вагомі й точні знання, забезпечує здобуття досвіду туристами. У статті розглянуто такі професійні якості, здібності та навички туристичного гіда, як співпереживання й розуміння, ентузіазм і здатність розважати, зосередженість на побудові дружніх стосунків, гнучкість, пунктуальність, бажання вчитися та готовність навчати інших, професіоналізм, здатність до ефективного спілкування, креативність, уміння імпровізувати й адаптуватися до ситуації, почуття гумору, уміння розповідати, майстерність актора та ораторське мистецтво.

Освічені туристичні гіди, які вміють ефективно спілкуватися та правильно передавати інформацію іноземним туристам, поєднують базові міжкультурні знання, а також знання з надання першої медичної допомоги.

Порушено питання поєднання різноманітних ролей у професії гіда. Список численних ролей, які виконує туристичний гід, включає ролі актора, амбасадора, охоронця, посередника, інформатора, перекладача, керівника, організатора, продавця, вчителя, психолога тощо.

Приділено увагу розвитку лідерських якостей особистості туристичного гіда. Як керівник туру, туристичний гід добре знає місцевість, особливо з культурної позиції, супроводжує туристів в автобусі, дає коментарі на шляху, домовляється про час і місця зустрічей, координує дії з музеями, ресторанами та водіями. Виконуючи роль керівника екскурсійної групи, гід виконує найважливіше призначення — бере на себе відповідальність. Детальний опис і характеристика різноманітних ропей, які виконує туристичний гід, приводить до кращого розуміння професійних обов'язків та важливості діяльності туристичного гіда.

**Ключові слова:** туристичний гід, професійна роль, характеристики, уміння, навички, знання.

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Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages and Regional Studies Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University **Problem presentation.** Professionals working in tourism and hospitality industry in Ukraine are required to possess good knowledge of tourism product, interpersonal skills, mastering foreign languages, offering quality standards.

The Faculty of Tourism of Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University provides new approaches and effective training of the future professionals in tourism and hospitality industry. The future careers the students achieve are: tourism managers, tour operators, tour agents, resort representatives, hotel managers, hotel receptionists, event coordinators, PR managers, executive chefs, tour guides, etc.

The objective of 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 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. Much attention is devoted to the development of future tourism professionals' leadership skills.

The promotion of Ukrainian tourism is an inseparable part of the activity of professional workers of tourism and hospitality who had been previously trained to possess the ability of performing a culture-oriented professional activity. The foreign visitors of Ukraine as a developing tourist destination tend to view tour guides as the representatives of the country [15]. Therefore, tour guides are responsible for recognizing social environment, arranging transportation, interpreting, handling problems, insulating travellers from difficulties and making the environment safe for tourists because they act as "intermediaries" between tourists and "the unknown". Tourist guiding comprises complicated and multivariate roles composed of different kinds of unrelated roles and sub-roles [8, p. 3]. Thus, tour guides perform multiple important roles in tourism on which our review is focused.

**Methodology**. The research is relied on the following methods: theoretical (analysis of scholarly work in pedagogy, linguistics and area studies regarding methodological approaches to teaching English as a foreign language), empirical (modelling real-world career scenarios), and practical (exercises and projects for successful combination of various professional roles).

**Literature review.** The previous studies of foreign scientists' research on tour guiding have mainly focused on tour guides' roles (Cohen, 1985; Weiler and Yu, 2007); tour guides' performance (Geva and Goldman, 1991; Mossberg, 1995); tourist satisfaction with tour guide services (A. Wong, 2001), tour guide administration system (T. Sokol, 2006) and tour guide's professionalism (B. Rabotic). The content

and methods of professional training of tourist guides were studied in detail by the following Ukrainian scientists: V. Babarytska, I. Chegaida, S. Grybanova, O. Karolop, A. Korotkova.

Despite the fact that the problems of tour guides' role, performance, training and administration system have found their partial coverage in certain scientific works, the problem of precise combination of multiple professional roles and their successful functioning in the profession of a tour guide remains insufficiently studied.

**Objective.** The article is dedicated to the profound study of different roles inseparably combined in the profession of a tour guide and skillfully introduced in the process of the tour guide's activity performance in modern conditions of tourism development.

**Discussion.** For our study it is essential to give the distinct working definition of the profession of a tour guide. The World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA) defines a tour guide as a person who guides visitors in the language of their choice and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area, and who normally possesses an area-specific qualification usually issued and/or recognised by the appropriate authority [12]. The European Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (EFTGA) offered the following definition: "a tour guide is a person who guides groups or individual visitors from abroad or from the home country around the monuments, sites and museums of a city or region, interprets in an inspiring and entertaining manner, in the language of the visitor's choice" [9]. 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" [3, p. 22]. Whereas T. Sokol claims that a tour guide "must be of high personal culture, erudite and possess the broad world outlook" [15, p. 183]. These definitions point out that a tour guide is responsible for directing and leading tourists on a sightseeing tour.

Having analyzed the definitions offered, 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.

Most foreign tourists tend to view their tour guides as representatives of the region or country. Although the Oxford dictionary defines a guide as "a person who shows others the way", the scientists stress that the role of a tour guide is much broader [10].

The purpose of tourist guiding is to make contribution to the promotion and appraisal of tourist attractions of Ukraine and provide a correct and better understanding of the visited areas. Through the activity of tourist guiding the socio-cultural function of tourism is performed. This function culturally enriches a person, plays an important role in the formation

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of one's worldview, influences the development of human personality, and, thus, raises the cultural level of society [15, p. 18].

In the article we widely use the term "role", which is clarified as "a function or part performed especially in a particular operation or process" [6, p. 608]. The profession of a tour guide combines some basic roles, multifunctional characteristics, skills and knowledge the interpretation of which is analyzed in our study.

Some of the basic roles of the tourist guides can be summarized as follows:

- 1) to make sure all members of the group stay together so no one gets lost;
- 2) to make sure they are on time for various arrivals and departures;
  - 3) to educate the group about places they visit;
- 4) to make alternative arrangements in case of delays, inconvenient weather conditions, over-bookings etc.;
- 5) to deal with personal issues regarding to dietary requirements, wheelchair accessibility for handicapped guests, sick travellers;
- 6) to confirm reservations prior to an arrival point on the route ensuring a safe and an enjoyable trip by planning and overseeing every detail of the tour;
- 7) to provide information about customs and rules to prevent any offensive behavior such as breaking social rules or violating others' privacy;
- 8) to give instructions about general behavior (e. g. taking photographs with or without flash or none at all, not to remain too close to glass cases, not to touch the exhibit, removing hats or covering bare shoulders, etc.);
- 9) to provide information about value of money in foreign currency, etc. [4, p. 112; 13, p. 40].

In their professional routine, tour guides fulfil great duties and take big responsibilities in tourism industry.

We base our division of roles performed by a tour guide on Cohen's (1985) distinguishment of four major components of a tour guide's role. They are:

- instrumental (a component, related with one's own responsibility for the smooth accomplishment of the tour as an ongoing social enterprise);
- social (a component concerned with one's own responsibility for the cohesion and morale of the tour group);
- interactional (a component performing the function of a middleman between one's own party and the local population, sites, institutions and touristic facilities):
- communicative (a component relates to the tour guide's role of communicating destination-related information to tourists) [2].

Thus, these components suggest that a tour guide acts as a cultural interface between the visitors and the local people and plays a vital role in introducing the local culture to visitors. In the process of inter-

preting the culture of the country visited a tour guide takes a great responsibility of promoting a destination. Though, much in this process depends on the guide's personality per se.

A highly-skilled tour guide should show accurate and significant knowledge, providing the engaging experience for tourists. Tour guides help to add a personal touch and influence on tourists' experience. Consequently, we distinguish the following professional qualities, abilities, skills a tour guide should possess:

- strong empathy and understanding. Tour guides accompany tourists from all over the world. For this reason, it is essential to commit effective communication. Tourists originate from various spheres, age groups, cultures, nationalities and backgrounds or speak different languages. The ability to handle social norms and expectations is the key to being an effective tour guide. Tour guides must be empathetic to cultural differences and prioritize making each presentation unique to their guests:
- entertaining and enthusiastic personality. A tour guide should be able to engage successfully with numerous tourists. Tour guides must consistently find opportunities to be motivating, useful, interesting, delightful, funny and friendly. Favourable atmosphere makes a tour appealing;
- focus on building friendly relationship. Tour guides exhibit patient, yet motivating and cheerful manners throughout tour excursions. They should build connection by encouraging effective conversations, asking questions, providing information and demonstrating enthusiasm;
- flexibility. Various approaches based on the audience have to be applied. A flexible approach to a situation might change the tourists's attitude towards unexpected issues and schedule changes;
- punctuality. Being punctual is one of the most essential characteristics a tour guide should possess.
   Meeting guests at designated areas at specific times is usually based on the tour guide's following a schedule from an itinerary with various timeframes. The most respected tour guides are punctual and organized;
- eagerness to learn and willingness to teach others. The tour group must be well informed. Tourists should learn new things and gather new insights while they are travelling. Highly-skilled tour guides continuously aim to facilitate ways to learn how to make each tour distinct and unique from the previous ones. They should care about identifying needed improvements, study or pay attention to what guests gain from their tours, learn by encouraging guests to provide necessary feedback (so they can use the information to enhance the future tours);
- professionalism. Tour guides should maintain mutual understanding by displaying a professional attitude. Qualified guides exhibit behaviours that are

representative of who they are. Professionalism is the characteristic which helps audiences see the tour guide as a reliable educational source. Being a professional includes essential attributes such as being honest, polite, punctual, attentive and courteous;

- ability to communicate effectively. Communicative proficiency is one of the strongest characteristics a tour guide has to possess. Tour guides must be able to articulate correctly, project their voices, speak clearly, pronounce words properly, help prevent any misunderstandings, command the attention of several people at a time, etc.;
- creativity. Creative tour guides embody new ideas into their presentations. They offer tourists to participate on the tour by solving mysteries, making up the ending of the story or motivate them to other ways of interaction;
- ability to improvise and adapt. Tour guides should be familiar with improvising and adaptation to the changing situations. They adapt to prevent loss of interest from the group. Adaptation and keeping up to date with changing times and constant advancements in technology are vital for the successful career of a tour guide;
- sense of humour. A tour guide's humour must be carefully framed and successful. During the tour some jokes are employed to control the atmosphere of the tour;
- storytelling and actor's skills. Tour guides should have a compelling eagerness and passion for their activity. They do not have to be locals to be a guide in the area introduced. There is a necessity to have enough desire to learn the history of an area, tell the story and explain the knowledge with enthusiasm to the tourists. Guides should consistently act positively, tell various interactive stories, share funny facts and little known secrets about the guided site;
- 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; correct use of word stress; grammar constructions; 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 [5].

Summing up the above offered professional characteristics of a tour guide we conclude that training a good tour guide is beneficial today. Tour guiding with authority, enthusiasm and high professionalism helps tourists get most authentic, memorable tours and rewarding experiences of a lifetime.

In our review of tour guide's professional features much attention is devoted to the development of *leadership* qualities of the personality. The analysis of the theory of transformational leadership (developed by

Bass in 1985) defines effective leadership as a process that causes change and transformation of the person within followers (tourists in our research), causing them to achieve extraordinary outcomes and become leaders in their own right [1]. According to the theory, leadership results in the development of four components – idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration [7], which are inseparable in the formation of the leading quality of a tour guide.

A tour leader has a more practical role and deals with the organisation of a tour. As a tour leader, the guide usually has good general knowledge of the local area, particularly from a cultural point of view, escorts tourists on the bus, gives commentary on the way, arranges meeting times and places, coordinates with museums, restaurants, and drivers. Being the tour group's leader he/she performs the main role – assuming responsibility [1]. In the process of training, the future tourist guides will gain and practise their leadership skills which they can successfully demonstrate at each guided tour.

One of the most prominent characteristics that a tour guide should possess is having a certain amount of knowledge on various topics. Perfect knowledge of the tour area is considered to be the greatest demand of the profession. While taking tourists on a journey to some of the most unique places in the world, tour guides play an educational role as they explain facts, history, landmarks, figures, local customs and more. They should also be able to answer additional tour related questions which may come up during the tour.

The knowledge of the profession of a tour guide should include:

- basic subjects' knowledge (<u>history</u>: national history, history of religions and art, political conditions of past civilizations, social conditions, daily lives, religious rituals, wars and peace agreements, architectural styles, mythology, archeological excavations, exhibition, classification and dating of artefacts, antiquities smuggling; geography: mountains, forests, rivers, lakes, seas, underground resources, climate; economy: economical structure, economical situation, agricultural; life of the destination: urban and provincial life, legal structure, educational status, unionization, customs and traditions, music, folklore, dance, clothing, eating habits, TV shows, social issues, human rights, crime rate, freedom of thought; politics: international relations, political history of the country and present situation; art: literature, theatre, ballet, exhibitions, seasonal shows and celebrations);
- intercultural knowledge (respect and comprehension of other cultures);
- foreign language knowledge (guiding tourists who come from different countries; fluency in at least one foreign language and speaking it efficiently.
  Therefore, knowledge of a foreign language is of great importance);

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- first-aid knowledge (responsibility for all group members at any time in any situation including emergencies, first-aid procedures and applications) [5].

Hence, knowledgeable tour guides who are able to communicate effectively and transmit the information correctly to foreign visitors, combine the basic, intercultural and first-aid knowledge make a trip insightful and unforgettable.

Having analyzed the knowledge and most vital qualities of the personality and professional characteristics of a tour guide we come across the question of combining different roles in the profession of a tour guide.

The tourism researchers Cohen (1985), Ap and Wong (2001), Dahles (2002), Cohen, Maurice & Cohen (2002) and Yu, Weiler and Ham (2001) state that a tour guide is:

- a leader capable of assuming responsibility;
- an information giver and fountain of knowledge;
- a mentor whose role resembles the role of teacher, tutor, instructor or advisor;
- a mediator and cultural brokerage (mediating cultural exchange between visitors and host cultures);
- an educator to help tourists understand the places they visit (to assisist tourists with understanding such topics as politics, economy, society, culture, religion, general knowledge, education, health, etc.);
- an ambassador extending hospitality and presents the destination in a way that makes visitors want to return;
- a host creating a comfortable environment for tourists and a person influencing the quality of service and the tourist experience, the length of stay and the resulting economic benefits for a local community [2; 5; 11].

The multiple choice of professional combination offered in the study above can be profoundly prolonged by the research on different tour guides' roles done by Zhang and Chow (2004) summarizing the published studies of the roles of tour guides over the last forty years. According to their analysis, the different roles of tour guides as defined by the world researchers are presented in the following list:

"A tour guide performs the role of a/an:

- actor (Holloway, 1981);
- ambassador (Hooloway, 1981; Schmidt, 1979);
- buffer (Pearce, 1982; Fine and Speer, 1985);
- caretaker (Fine and Speer, 1985);
- catalyst (Holloway, 1981);
- culture broker (Holloway, 1981; Katz, 1985);
- information-giver (Holloway, 1981; Hughes, 1991);
- intermediary (Schmidt, 1979; Ryan and Dewar, 1995);
- interpreter/translator (Almagador, 1985; Holloway, 1981; Katz, 1985; Ryan and Dewar, 1995);
- leader (Cohen, 1985; Geva and Goldman, 1991);

- mediator (Schmidt, 1979; Holloway, 1981;Cohen, 1985; Katz, 1985);
- organiser (Hughes, 1991; Pearce, 1982; Schuchat, 1983);
- salesperson (Fine and Speer, 1985; Gronroos, 1978);
  - shaman (Schmidt, 1979);
- teacher (Holloway, 1981; Pearce, 1982; Fine and Speer, 1985; Manchini, 2001)" [14].

Having studied the roles offered by the world scientists, we cannot concur more with the majority that a professional tour guide successfully combines all these roles.

In modern conditions of tourism development, it is essential to pay attention to the new and compelling roles (i. e. event creator, gastronomist, negotiator, psychologist) a tour guide performs today.

As well as the *event creator*, the tour guide's duties lie in planning a tour with attention to financial and time constraints; booking venues and making rational decisions. If a tour guide performs the role of a *gastronomist*, he poses as a gourmet, a real connoisseur and lover of good food who simultaneously is eager to share his/her experience with the members of the guided group. As the *negotiator*, a tour guide either comes to an agreement with tourists or helps them reach such an agreement in possible conflict situations. By means of observing and interpreting tourists' behaviours, states of mind and emotions a tour guide plays the role of a *psychologist* of the group.

The profound analysis of various roles performed by a tour guide results in our **conclusions** that the profession of a tour guide is being a masterful multitasker, a tour expert and a group leader in tandem. Our further scientific research will be focused on the formation of tour guide's interpretation skills.

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