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## PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF ENVIRONMENT DESIGNERS: DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT

*The article is devoted to the problem of professional competence of environment designers. The aim of the article is as follows: to specify the concept of "professional competence of an environment designer" based on the study of scientific and pedagogical literature. A significant scope of scientific and pedagogical literature has been processed, which highlights various aspects of environment designers' professional training, as well as the application of competency-based approach in higher education which requires to clarify the main research concepts. It was found that at the beginning of the 21st century, environmental design, as a branch of artistic creativity, is considered from the perspective of a complex combination of beauty, aesthetics, technical and technological innovations, and its main task is to create and organize an environment that reflects the heritage of civilization's spiritual and material culture. Environmental design is a professional field that encompasses the design and artistic activities of specialists with the aim of creating a space, which requires a special training. Taking into account the specifics of the activity of a modern environment designer, it seems logical to say that the development of his professionalism is a long-term process that continues throughout the entire professional activity, and initial professional training is a kind of system, the main task of which is to acquaint students with the essence of the profession and directions of its further development. Therefore, the professional competence of an environment designer should be considered as an integrative quality that reflects a system of knowledge, a set of abilities and skills necessary for their use, taking into account general human and professional values and attitudes, which allow one to independently and effectively design a subject-spatial environment considering design, functional, technological, artistic, aesthetic, economic expediency and efficiency, requests and interests of consumers in established as well as rapidly changing conditions of the professional environment. The study of the systemic components of the professional competence of an environment designer is considered a perspective for further scientific research.*

**Key words:** competence, professional competence, environment designer, environmental design, higher education system, training of environment designers.

**Problem statement.** Integration processes with Europe penetrate more and more aspects of society's life, including the educational sphere. Ukraine, striving to become part of the educational and scientific space of Europe, is actively updating its educational system in accordance with European standards, integrating the principles of the Bologna Declaration into the educational process, recognizing the importance of this step for the economic, social, intellectual, technological and cultural progress of the country.

The system of higher education of Ukraine functions in the relevant regulatory and legal field, so the educational activity of higher education institutions is based, first of all, on the Law of Ukraine "On Education" [6] and the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" [5]. Professional training of future environment designers is implemented in accordance with the Standard of Higher Education in the specialty 022 "Design" for the first (bachelor's) level of higher education [10]. This specialty belongs to the field of knowledge 02 Culture and Art.

**The analysis of recent research and publications.** Modern scientific and pedagogical literature is

represented by the publications of researchers who reveal the meaning and characteristics of the concepts: "competence" (O. Lokshyna, A. Maksymova, O. Ovcharuk, K. Rudnitska, V. Stynska, L. Zayats, Z. Yashchyshyn, N. Baryla, H. Tovkanets, S. Furdyuk, S. Chyrchuk, C. Che Ibrahim, S. Belayutham, M. Mohammad, S. Ismail, N. Mukan, N. Chubinska, G. Zhongjun, N. Turtola, K. Määttä, A. Wallo, H. Kock, D. Lundqvist, A. Coetzer), "professional competence" (Z. Bakum, L. Saprykivna, N. Derevyanko, V. Kovalenko, T. Mala, O. Tamarkina). Scientists analyse the peculiarities of professional training of designers: S. Alekseeva, V. Kushnir, S. Nisevych, L. Orshanskyi, I. Petrova, Yu. Sye, M. Markovych, N. Slobodna, V. Tymenko, O. Krykun, V. Tomashevskyi). However, a thorough analysis of scientific sources shows that they lack an interpretation of the concept of "professional competence of an environment designer". Therefore, it is logical to conduct research in this direction.

**The aim of the article** is as follows: to specify the concept of "professional competence of an environment designer" based on the study of scientific and pedagogical literature.

**The research results.** Carrying out scientific research requires the specification of basic concepts, which makes it possible to understand the author's position regarding the study of a scientific and pedagogical problem. Our scientific interest is the professional training of future environment designers. It is logical to specify the main categories of the study, which make it possible to understand the concept of "professional competence of an environment designer".

In the "New Interpretative Dictionary of Ukrainian Language" "competent" is interpreted as someone who "has sufficient knowledge in any field; well versed in something; clever; which is based on knowledge" [18, p. 874].

In the "Reference dictionary of professional pedagogy" it is stated that "competence (lat. *competens*, *competentis* – capable, suitable) means educated in a certain field; one who has the right by his own knowledge or authority to do or decide anything". In addition, we emphasize that when they say "this is not my competence", as a rule, they mean exactly the second meaning; when they say "he is incompetent", moreover – "professionally incompetent", it means a lack of knowledge, skills, experience, etc. Competence is a specially structured (organized) set of knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes acquired in the learning process, which allow a person to determine, identify and solve, regardless of the context (of the situation), problems that are characteristic of a certain field of activity" [13, p. 85].

In the "Dictionary of basic concepts for the course "Pedagogy" we find the following interpretations: "competence is 1) knowledge, experience in one or another field; 2) integral manifestation of professionalism, which combines elements of professional and general culture, experience, seniority of teaching activity and teaching creativity; 3) an integrated characteristic of personality quality, a productive block formed through experience, knowledge, skills, attitudes, behavioural reactions. Competence is built on a combination of mutually relevant cognitive attitudes and practical skills, values, emotions, behavioural components, knowledge and skills, all that can be mobilized for active action" [1, p. 40].

Regarding the legal framework of the educational field, the Law of Ukraine "On Education" states that "competence" should be interpreted as "a dynamic combination of knowledge, abilities, skills, ways of thinking, views, values, and other personal qualities that determine a person's ability to successfully socialize, conduct professional and/or further educational activities" [6]. The Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" states that "competence" is "a person's ability to successfully socialize, study, and conduct professional activities, which arises on the basis of a dynamic combination of knowledge, abilities, skills, ways of thinking, views, values, other personal qualities" [5].

Researchers N. Miloradova and V. Shevchenko are convinced that competence "is an integral component of the personality structure, which accumulates her life experience, which she acquires first of all during professional education, then in professional activities and necessarily during interaction with social environment; it is a reflection of the professional experience of an individual within the competence of a specific professional activity" [9, p. 236].

M. Golovan proposes to consider competence from several perspectives: as an

- "integrated characteristic of personality quality", which reflects the result of a person's training and experience,

- "integrative personality quality", which presents the specialist's ability and readiness to work in a professional environment;

- "as an ability" that allows to realize one's intentions, satisfy the needs of an individual and social nature;

- "as a combination, a set of knowledge, abilities, skills" that contribute to the establishment and organization of certain activities, making balanced decisions;

- "as the ability" to perform certain functions;

- "as readiness" for activity;

- "as an experience" [7, p. 228–229].

Studying the concepts of "competence", the authors note: "in the psychological and pedagogical literature today, the concepts of "competence" is quite clearly distinguished. The concepts of "competence" is systemic and multi-component and is widely used in various types of human activity to indicate the high level of professionalism. The same meaning is given to the concept in pedagogy in order to describe the quality of training and activity of specialists, which is characterized by the ability to perform mental operations (analytical, critical, communicative), the presence of practical skills, common sense, etc. In addition, this concept has its own classification and hierarchy" [3, p. 11].

As we can see from the examples, scientists use the concept of "competence" by putting different content into it. In our opinion, the presence of an unambiguous, clear definition of the concept of "competence" is important both in the theory and practice of education, because its use in the standards of higher education, educational programs, syllabi of various subjects enables the participants of the educational process to understand the essence of the goals and tasks, expected learning outcomes, which has a direct impact both on the educational process itself and on the evaluation of students' activities [21].

We agree with H. Tovkanets that "the formation of competences is the result of the interaction of many different factors; modern life requires a person to acquire a certain set, a complex of competencies, which are called key; the selection of key compe-

tences should take place at the fundamental level, taking into account the worldviews of society and the individual, and their interaction; the influence of cultural and other contexts must be taken into account; selection and identification of competences are influenced by subjective factors related to the individual: age, gender, social status, etc.; the definition and selection of key competencies requires a wide discussion among specialists and representatives of various social groups" [15, p. 281].

Based on the analysis of research literature, in our study we interpret competence as a set of knowledge, abilities and skills, values and attitudes that allow a person, personality to use them in the practice of interaction with the social environment.

It is worth mentioning the position, according to which it is recommended to consider the competency-based approach in a learning process as one aimed at the development and formation of general cultural, general professional and key (universal) competencies of a person. As a result, there is the formed professional competence, which we consider to be the integral characteristics of the individual, as well as a combination of general cultural competence, general professional competence, key competences and work experience [16, p. 435].

When considering the category "professional competence", it is worth starting with the fact that a profession is "a vocation that requires special knowledge and often long and intensive academic training", "the main vocation or work" [22], "a type of work that requires special education or training" [20]. In English-language dictionaries, "professional" means something that "relates to or is a characteristic of a profession" [22]; the one that "relates to human work, especially work that requires special training" [20].

The reference edition "Professional pedagogy: a dictionary of terms and concepts" provides the interpretation of professional competence as "a concept that highlights aspects of human behaviour related to the performance of work, it is the ability of an employee to perform certain types of work in a specific profession, achieving high quantitative and qualitative labour results. A competent person in a certain field has the appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities that allow him to act effectively. The definition of competence as a set of knowledge and skills necessary for effective professional activity has become the most widespread: the ability to analyse, predict the consequences of professional activity, use information [11, p. 23-24].

Based on the study of reference sources, it was found that design is ambiguous and can be interpreted as "thought-out purposeful planning", "a mental project or scheme in which the means to achieve a goal are laid out", "arrangement of elements or details in a product or work of art", "decorative pattern", "creative art of performing aesthetic

or functional designs" [22]. It is also "the process and art of planning and making detailed drawings of something", "the way in which something is planned and made", it is "a drawing that is made to show how they would like something to be built or made" [20]. Analysis of the proposed definitions shows that they all have common characteristics: creative idea, planning and implementation of the project.

According to the definition of V. Busel, "design" is "the artistic construction and design of things (trans. tools, industrial products and interior design, the art of design" [4, p. 294]. The author then presents two more interpretations, among which there are the following: "artistic design activity aimed at creating new types and types of products that would meet the requirements of society (usefulness, ease of use, beauty, etc.)" [4, p. 294], as well as "the corresponding branch of art and scientific knowledge, technical aesthetics" [4, p. 294].

The "Dictionary of Ukrainian Language Online" provides the definition of design as "design of interiors, artistic design of objects, design of the appearance of products, etc." [14]. "Design is a project artistic and technical activity for the development of industrial products with high consumer properties and aesthetic qualities, for the formation of a harmonious environment in the residential, industrial and socio-cultural spheres" [8, p. 7].

Another concept that needs to be clarified is the concept of "environment". The environment is "a set of natural conditions in which the vital activity of any organism takes place", "social and domestic conditions in which a person's life takes place; environment" [23]. English-language dictionaries interpret the environment as "circumstances, objects or conditions by which a person is surrounded", "a complex of physical, chemical and biotic factors (such as climate, soil and living things) that act on an organism or an ecological community and ultimately determine its form and survival", "a set of social and cultural conditions that affect the life of an individual or a community" [22]; "conditions, landscape, etc. around a person, place or thing", "surrounding things, circumstances, conditions" [20].

In the reference literature, we find an interpretation of the "environmental design" category. Environmental design is "the arrangement of large-scale aspects of the environment by means of architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, urban planning, regional planning, etc., usually in combination; study or practice of it" [20].

At the beginning of the 21st century, environmental design, as a branch of artistic creativity, is considered from the perspective of a complex combination of beauty, aesthetics, technical and technological innovations, and its main task is to create and organize an environment that reflects the heritage of civilization's spiritual and material culture. Environmental

design is a professional field that encompasses the design and artistic activities of specialists with the aim of creating a space: closed, semi-open, open.

We believe that environmental design is the process of considering the surrounding parameters of the environment when developing plans, programs, policies, buildings or products. "Its main task is to create a space that would improve the natural, social, cultural and physical environment of individual territories" [19, p. 225]. Environmental design refers to the physical environment that provides conditions for human activity, ranging from buildings and parks, green spaces to neighbourhoods, the local community, and supporting infrastructure such as roads and highways.

Since our research is related to the analysis of environment designers' professional competence, we consider it appropriate to analyse the concept of "designer". Processing reference sources gives the following search results: a designer is "a person who develops and executes projects for works of art, clothing, machines, etc.", "a person who designs; in particular, makes original sketches", "a person who develops or executes projects, creates forms, structures and patterns for works of art or machines" [20]; "one who creates and often executes plans for a project", "one who creates and produces a new style or design of a product", "intended to reflect the latest in refined taste or fashion" [22].

The professional functionality of environment designers is extremely diverse. "When designing the object-spatial environment, modern designers increasingly focus their "view" on the artistic understanding of design problems, the hierarchy of this concept in social, cultural and economic aspects" [17, p. 51]. It is about the creation and improvement of residential and industrial interiors, public areas and the natural environment, and the professional activity of environmental designers may involve the development of interior projects, landscape compositions, etc. This means that the design of a new product can vary from a thoughtful arrangement of existing environmental components in a new configuration to the creation of a completely new artefact, the purpose of which is to contribute to the achievement of a defined goal. An example of the first is the arrangement of furniture and appliances for ergonomically arranging the kitchen. The second involves the development of a system the task of which is to identify and remove weeds from the lawn during grass cutting. In both cases, the customer expects that the designer will take into account his needs, moreover, he will provide the functionality that he did not even think about before, which will simplify the use of the device and bring pleasure. It is about the fact that the user or customer is a priori confident that the designer is aware of the safety rules, legal requirements and took them into account during the

development of the product, considering the principles of efficiency, effectiveness, "price-quality" ratio, etc. In other words, "the result of design activity is the emergence of design as a social phenomenon, which is a type of activity related to the design of the objective world, the development of examples of rational construction of the objective environment, which corresponds to the complex functioning of modern society" [12, p. 160]. So, "design activity means creativity, which covers the following stages:

1) development of a technical task, in the context of which the raw data are revealed;

2) development of a technical proposal, in the context of which analysis is given – informational, functional, sociological, aesthetic, ergonomic, socio-economic;

3) development of a sketch project – artistic and design, ergonomic, color and texture and other solutions are specified;

4) development of the technical project – the final results of the development are fixed" [2, p. 47-48].

**Conclusions.** Taking into account the specifics of the activity of a modern environment designer, it seems logical to say that the development of his professionalism is a long-term process that continues throughout the entire professional activity, and initial professional training is a kind of system, the main task of which is to acquaint students with the essence of the profession and directions of its further development. Therefore, the professional competence of an environment designer should be considered as an integrative quality that reflects a system of knowledge, a set of abilities and skills necessary for their use, taking into account general human and professional values and attitudes, which allow one to independently and effectively design a subject-spatial environment considering design, functional, technological, artistic, aesthetic, economic expediency and efficiency, requests and interests of consumers in established as well as rapidly changing conditions of the professional environment.

The study of the systemic components of the professional competence of an environment designer is considered a perspective for further scientific research.

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### Шайнер Г. І. Професійна компетентність дизайнерів середовища: визначення поняття

Стаття присвячена проблемі професійної компетентності дизайнерів середовища. Метою статті є: уточнення поняття «професійна компетентність дизайнера середовища» на основі аналізу науково-педагогічної літератури. Опрацьовано значний обсяг науково-педагогічної літератури, в якій висвітлені різні аспекти професійної підготовки дизайнерів середовища, а також застосування компетентнісного підходу у вищій освіті, що потребує уточнення основних концепцій дослідження. Встановлено, що на початку 21 століття дизайн середовища, як галузь художньої творчості, розглядається з позиції складного поєднання краси, естетики, технічних і технологічних інновацій, а його основним завданням є створення та організація середовища, що відображає надбання духовної та матеріальної культури цивілізації. Дизайн середовища – це професійна галузь, яка охоплює дизайнерську та художню діяльність спеціалістів з метою створення простору, що потребує спеціальної підготовки. Враховуючи специфіку діяльності сучасного дизайнера середовища, видається логічним твердження, що розвиток його професіоналізму є довготривалим процесом, який триває протягом усієї професійної діяльності, а початкова професійна підготовка є своєрідною системою, головним завданням якою є ознайомлення студентів із сутністю професії та напрямками

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*її подальшого розвитку. Тому професійну компетентність дизайнера середовища слід розглядати як інтегративну якість, що відображає систему знань, сукупність умінь і навичок, необхідних для їх використання, з урахуванням загальнолюдських і професійних цінностей і установок, які дозволяють самостійно та ефективно проектувати предметно-просторове середовище з урахуванням дизайнерської, функціональної, технологічної, художньо-естетичної, економічної доцільності та ефективності, запитів та інтересів споживачів у сформованих та швидкозмінних умовах професійного середовища. Дослідження систематичних складових професійної компетентності дизайнера середовища розглядається як перспектива для подальших наукових досліджень.*

**Ключові слова:** компетентність, професійна компетентність, дизайнер середовища, дизайн середовища, система вищої освіти, підготовка дизайнерів середовища.