

partnerships and collaboration; to establish appropriate infrastructural support for international activities. Providing the strategy the UCP will spread the international connections and cooperation.

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## **PARTICIPATION IN EXCHANGE PROGRAMS AS THE INDICATOR OF STUDENTS' PROFESSIONAL SKILLS FORMATION**

### **УЧАСТЬ У МІЖНАРОДНИХ ПРОГРАМАХ ОБМІНУ ЯК ПОКАЗНИК СФОРМОВАНОСТІ ПРОФЕСІЙНИХ ЯКОСТЕЙ СТУДЕНТІВ**

The priorities of higher education in Ukraine have changed a lot for last years. It used to be oriented to reproducing of got information but now it is oriented to the students' development. Now the main aim of education is personal and professional development of students, the formation of skills demanded in the modern business world and knowledge used for successful international cooperation. The adopted laws in the sphere of education (such as Law about professional education, Law about higher education and other) judicially support the orientation of Ukraine to the European model of education. The high qualified specialist on the European educational model is a person who is able not only to present the knowledge but also to analyze the situation, to make decisions, to foresee the possible development. A specialist should have high level of adaptability, flexibility, communicational and organizational skills, creative and critical thinking and leadership skills. The issues of education under the European integration have been investigated by many Ukrainian and foreign scientists. V.Parigin and O.Maslov learnt the peculiarities of professional higher education at universities; O.Gluzman and L.Semichenko investigated the dynamics of university education in the modern world; O.Yabrotska and K.Sohova worked under the process of students' personal skills development in the educational process; R.Gryshkova and O.Redkina learnt students' formation in the process of professional education; J.Meskon and P.Hedowry investigated students' leadership skills formation as the main aim of professional higher education.

Professional higher education contains theoretical and practical courses as well as language course. Although the number of language classes is constantly increasing the level of received knowledge is not enough. The questionnaires of students of the first studying year of different departments at Petro Mohyla Black Sea State University showed that the biggest expected value of studying is high

English level. More than 70% of those who have entered the university would like to speak English to a good standard. Hence, when at the end of the second studying year the same students were asked to fill in the questionnaires, almost 35% were not satisfied with the results of English learning. They evaluate their level as middle and not enough for fluent speaking. The same questionnaires were taken among students of Mykolayiv State University and among students of Mykolayiv State Agricultural University. The results showed that almost 65% of sophomores is not satisfied with the level of English. They evaluate it as average or low and they are not ready to communicate with native speakers. The students of all universities were asked a question about the ways of increasing the teaching level of English language. Students offered the following ways of increasing the level of English knowledge:

To provide new methods of studying – 6,8%;

To involve native speakers as professional English lecturers – 12,6%;

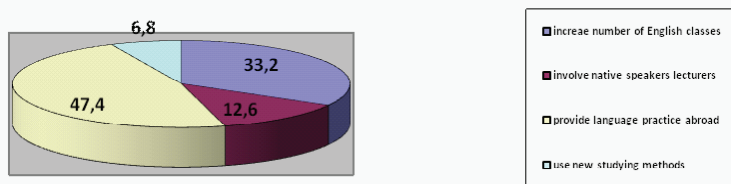
To provide language practice for students after the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> studying years – 47,4%;

To increase the number of English classes- 33,2%.

The results of the questionnaires are presented in diagram 1.

*Diagram 1*

**Ways of increasing the students' English level during the studying process.**

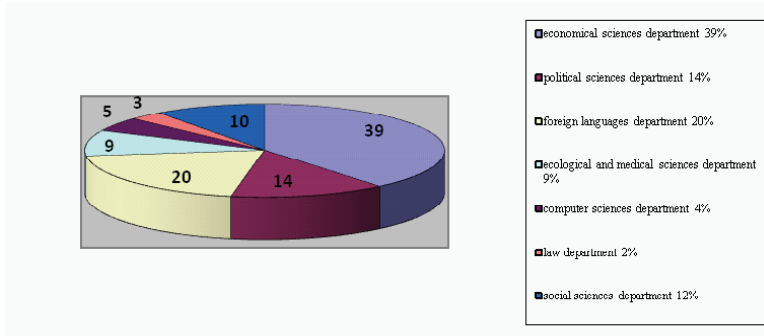


The majority of students are deeply sure that the international practice will help them to increase the level of English. Living and studying in English speaking surrounding can provide the necessary level of practical language usage. At the same time international practice gives the opportunity to develop the cross cultural competence of students as well as to improve language skills. Modern Ukrainian society provides a lot of possibilities for the students to get such language practice. A lot of students' exchange programs supported by the Ukrainian government allow students to have language practice which varies from 3 weeks to 1 year. One of such programs is Camp America which is provided by the American Institute of Foreign Study in London, UK. This program has been offering students 9 – 12 week language practice since 1969. In Ukraine this program has been working for 13 years and for 5 years in the Southern part of Ukraine. For this period more than 500 students took part in the program. Living and working in English speaking surrounding, practicing in the studying fields (accounting, business administrating, teaching, social work) gave

great opportunity to the students to increase the professional level and to improve language skills. Analyzing the statistics of departments students of which take part in CA program we can point that the majority of students are future economists. It is easily explained by the demands of this profession – fluent English speaking, high level of leadership skills, communicational and organizational skills, team work abilities and international experience. All these features can be formed and developed by participating in CA program. On the second place are the students of foreign languages department. Naturally they are interested in observing the country of learnt language; moreover, working as counselors and tutors they get rather important experience dealing with teenagers which is very useful for their future. The percentage of students' participation in CA program is presented in diagram 2.

*Diagram 2*

**The departments students of which took part in CA program in 2004-2009 (percentage)**



Analyzing the number of students who took part in the international exchange program CA, we can stress that the number has much increased (from 15 applicants in 2005 to 138 applicants in 2009). Moreover, the number is constantly growing up. The students from Petro Mohyla Black Sea State university are in big demand in the USA. They are rather high qualified specialists with good personal skills and language level. In February 2009 Petro Mohyla Black Sea State University signed the agreement about cooperation with Camp America London office. Under the terms of the agreement CA will provide language practice to all students of the second studying year of university (if they correspond to the requirements of the program). This practice will last for 9 weeks and will take place at children summer camps in the USA. Students will have practice according to their skills and abilities which will provide them the opportunity to increase not only the professional level but also the language level. Also CA office in London offers a long – term program for the students which allows them to study at American high college or university for 12 months and live in an American family. The signed agreement also provides the opportunity for lecturers and students of university of

internship and language practice at Plymouth University, UK. Language practice at Plymouth University is oriented to extending the professional knowledge as well as to sharing the experience. All offered programs provide great possibilities for the students and lecturers to increase the professional level, to widen the outlook, to share experience and to get high level of English language.

One of the main goals of Ukrainian education is the formation of a well – qualified specialist with a high level of personal skills according to the European standards. International practice (exchange programs) provided by Petro Mohyla Black Sea State University assists such development and allows to get as much knowledge and skills as possible. High level of English language, good theoretical and practical knowledge will make the specialist who will be in great demand not only in Ukraine but also in Europe.

Having analyzed the feedbacks of students who took part in CA program, we made the conclusion that 95% of applicants evaluate their practice as very useful and are satisfied with its results. Among achieved goals of the program 65% named language practice, 25% - new experience and professional skills and 10% - travel. Evaluating the level of English knowledge before and after participating in the program, we made the conclusion that the language skills have improved a lot at 45% of applicants. 30% of applicants pointed that the English level has become advanced and 15% of applicants said that the level is good but not enough so they would like to take part in the program again. Among all applicants more than 50% took part in the CA program again which shows its effectiveness. About 15% of students took part in other programs of American Institute of Foreign Study – AuPair in America, Educare and other. Students' exchange programs provide opportunities of professional and personnel development, language practice and cultural learning. Via such programs students form and develop their communicational and leadership skills, flexibility and responsibility, team work and success motivation. Investigating new culture, way of life and principles of work students spread their outlook which helps them in their future successful career in Ukraine.

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