THE IMPORTANCE OF SOFT SKILLS IN EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

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The quality of higher education is a necessary condition for the successful functioning of institutes and universities. Educational activities in establishments of higher education should lead to participants' satisfaction in the educational process, taking into account personal development, as well as the requirements of modern society.

Considering the transformational changes in the educational system of Ukraine, we cannot avoid the need for soft skills, which have become part of modern science.

According to the glossary of the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance, soft skills “allow graduates of establishments of higher education to be successful in their workplace” and are often synonymous with transferable skills, which are valuable in any workplace, despite professional industry [1].

Nowadays not only hard skills but also soft skills are important components of future applying for a job. That is why a balance of these skills can lead to successful outcomes. Applicants must have deep knowledge in the professional sphere but employers are also attentive to personal qualities.

Outstanding businesspeople and leaders of the country have become famous because of their constant improvement of working capacity and leadership. It shows whether they can hold positions for a long time.

We can note that “learning soft skills in an integrated curriculum is important for more progressive, focused, and structured changes in the curriculum, because the mastery of soft skills is good for teachers, making teachers able to carry out higher quality, effective teaching practices, and sustainable” [2]. Nowadays educators pay close attention to the curriculum as it contains information to be used in studying. Therefore, they should include all skills so as to indicate students' experience.

Considering distance learning, the development of soft skills becomes an essential part. N. Schneider, A. Meirovich, N. Dolev proposed a model for these skills development and applied only minor changes in the curriculum. They developed a tool that includes various assignments and further assessment to check personal development [3]. Teachers can use such tasks in their work and then verify the progress.
In the process of teaching foreign languages, one should take into consideration abilities, which are called «4 C’s» (critical thinking; creativity; collaboration; communication) [4].

In a democratic society, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication are necessary for normal human life today. Critical thinking is indispensable for making decisions, formulating conclusions, eliminating distortions, appropriate understanding information and others. Creativity allows finding new ideas that deviate from accepted patterns of thinking. Students can solve problems in an alternative way. Collaboration is important for achieving the same goal due to various students’ efforts. If they need to do the task quickly, they can focus on a common goal. Communication is a need for successful language learning although it is a difficult skill to develop. There should be a comfortable educational environment in order to students' ability to express themselves. Communication interaction is the best way for developing soft skills. Foreign language teachers can influence the type of learning. Therefore, they should develop critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication using diverse exercises and tasks.

All in all, soft skills are an indispensable part of students' social lives and professional development. Teachers of foreign languages can develop soft skills considering critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication. It is important to use various assignments as well as assessment to develop these skills.

References:
[1] Глосарій. Назяво. Вилучено з: https://naqa.gov.ua/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/%d0%93%d0%bb%d0%be%d1%81%d0%b0%d1%80%d1%96%d0%b9.pdf