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## CONCEPT OF GLOBAL COMPETENCE AND ITS MAIN COMPONENTS

**Abstract.** *The article is aimed at analyzing and systematizing scholarly views on the essence and content of the global competence of the individual in view of the challenges facing modern society. The following main methods were used: analysis, synthesis, generalization – to highlight the essence of the concept “global competence” and the formation of conclusions. Given the differences in the understanding of global competence among scholars around the world, the various categories included in the studied concept (relevant knowledge, skills, values) are considered. Global competence is viewed as a set of basic knowledge, skills and values necessary for successful living to understand international issues and successfully interact in different areas with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Four main abilities that determine the basis of the individual’s global competence (the ability to critically study the world outside the individual’s immediate environment; the ability to see and understand their own perspectives and the prospects of others, given the growing role of cultural interaction and diversity in the modern world; the ability to effective interpersonal and intercultural interaction (including the use of modern technologies); the ability to actively participate in global processes in the sustainable society) are considered. It is noted that a modern globally competent student must know the history of their country, its culture, traditions and appreciate other cultures, find common grounds with other members of society, taking into account the specifics of their cultural norms, and understand the complexity and diversity of societal processes in the world, to establish the connection between historical events, modern world economic and social phenomena. It is emphasized that globally competent students should be aware of their own uniqueness and act in society in such a way as not to restrict the uniqueness and freedom of expression of other people.*

**Key words:** *global competence, personality abilities, personality life activity, interpersonal interaction, intercultural interaction.*

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**Introduction.** With the rapid development of modern technologies, which have given people the opportunity to travel to any part of the world within days or even hours, to share information within seconds, to influence worldwide processes acting locally, the term “globalization” has become a common thing. As early as the second half of the previous century the developed countries included globalization and global challenges on the agenda, understanding how it can change the world. Thus, the global component began to appear in economy, politics, education and other spheres of our lives. Such expressions as “global competence”, “soft skills”, “intercultural competence”, “cultural awareness” and others can be found in job advertisements,

college curricula and national education programs. Each document presents its own explanation of the term and gives a short list of criteria with knowledge and skills which are needed to become globally competent.

**Aim and tasks.** The aim of the paper was to analyze and systematize scholarly views on the essence and content of the global competence of the individual in view of the challenges facing modern society. To achieve this aim we set the following tasks: to analyze the existing studies of the global competence; to compare the concepts of the global competence suggested by the scholars; to highlight the main components which are needed to raise a globally competent individual; to identify the set of knowledge and skills to overcome the global challenges of the present and future.

**Research methods.** In order to collect the data for their further analysis, we analyzed the existing research works, conference proceedings and frameworks of numerous organizations and associations which deal with global competence. The results of the study are presented in the descriptive way on the basis of the theoretical analysis of the existing definitions and, on this basis, provide the summary table of the main elements of global competence.

**Research results.** The definitions of global competence vary from the very general and simple, like the ability to be “at home in the world” [10, p. 296], to the more complex ones. But the researchers agree that most of the definitions are of American origin, though little commonality can be found among them [7, p. 7]. Having studied the existing explanations of global competence we can say that the concept is coined based on the field of education it is going to be used in and on the academic program it is included into (whether it is the program created to evaluate global engineering competence, the Programme for International Student Assessment or the list of the “21st Century skills applied to the world” presented by the U. S. Department of Education [9, p. 2]).

In any case, all of the definitions of “global competence” presented either by scholars or organizations include the goals and challenges of the national and global economy, politics and technological development. Starting from intercultural competence and gradually changing into global competence the concept has embraced the economic and educational strategies of each decade. Having compared the requirements which are put forward by the modern society we managed to determine the set of knowledge, skills and values which are needed to form a globally competent individual.

Initially, global competence was identified with the concept of intercultural competence. According to some scholars [4; 8; 10], the main idea of intercultural competence is to be open to the

possibilities of other people, languages and cultures and therefore be able to communicate across boundaries; to see the relationships between cultures, to perceive and cope with difference.

The importance of global component in education was already proved in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, complied with the goals and challenges of the U. S. education of the previous century and was accompanied by the chain of historical events which took place after the Second World War. Thus, shortly after World War II the U. S. government already began to invest in the global Fulbright program aimed at supporting American students and teachers for studying and teaching abroad and invited foreigners to do the same in the USA. Yet the earliest concerns of the U. S. educators were connected with the shortage of the foreign language learning among the American students, which made American specialists lose to the European ones. So, after the end of the Cold War the Department of the Defense invested in programs intended to develop global competence of American undergraduates mainly through building their language competence and studying abroad [1, p. 5].

Therefore, it can be concluded that intercultural competence was sometimes identified with global competence and was mainly introduced through the foreign language education. Another variation of intercultural competence was critical cultural awareness which was viewed as an ability to evaluate critically perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries [10, p. 298].

The subsequent studies of global competence have one thing in common, they define the concept using several dimensions: knowledge, ability/skills, attitudes and values. C. Sälzer and N. Roczen [7] viewed the global competence as the development of “knowledge, ability, and predisposition to work effectively with people who define problems different than they do” [7. p. 7]. While F. Reimers [6], the Ford Foundation Professor of the Practice in International Education and Director of the Global Education Innovation Initiative and of The International Education Policy Program at Harvard University, presented a more detailed definition. The scholar assumed that global competence is the knowledge and skills to help people understand the flat world in which they live, an interdisciplinary approach to comprehend global affairs and events. Reimers perceives it as “the ability to interact peacefully, respectfully and productively with fellow human beings from diverse geographies” [6, p. 185].

Hence, the previous two definitions consider the concept of global competence mostly in terms of intercultural relationships and intercultural awareness. While the definitions presented below will show more practical application of global competence and its influence on the

international labor market.

Including the concept of global competence into the academic program institutions were committed to produce globally competent graduates who are able to function effectively in the global marketplace and provide leadership in the international arena [1, p. 4]. J. DeBoer [2] along with her fellow researchers from MIT also studied the concept of globally competent students from the point of view of future employment and defined global competence as the ability to “work and communicate effectively in national and international contexts”. They, as well, outlined the two key dimensions: *knowledge* (students’ recognition of differences between their own cultural values or beliefs and those of individuals in other cultures; recognition of how culture impacts professional fields in multiple nations; and recognition of differences in the impact of history, politics, and economics on decision-making in different cultures) and *skills* (students’ ability to communicate in other cultures, their ability to solve problems in a foreign context, and their ability to work in teams composed of culturally diverse members).

The Accrediting Bureau for Engineering and Technology programs (ABET) added the following “soft skills” to the list of the skills required in graduates of the engineering degrees:

- ability to function in the multidisciplinary teams;
- ability to communicate effectively;
- including global and societal context into education;
- knowledge of contemporary issues.

As we can see from the list, these “soft skills” fully comply with the idea of global competence and its elements appeared in other definitions [1, p. 4].

In 2010 the National Education Association (NEA) provided its own definition, according to which “global competence refers to the acquisition of in-depth knowledge and understanding of international issues, an appreciation of and ability to learn and work with people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, proficiency in a foreign language, and skills to function productively in an interdependent world community”. The definition in question contains four basic elements: international awareness; appreciation of cultural diversity; proficiency in foreign languages; competitive skills.

According to the group of Educators for Global Competence, globally competent students are able to perform the following four abilities [3, p. 11]:

1. Investigate the world beyond their immediate environment.
2. Recognize perspectives.

3. Communicate ideas effectively with diverse audiences.

4. Take action towards sustainable development, being active participants in the global processes.

Globally-competent students are supposed to acquire:

- knowledge of other world regions, cultures, and international issues;
- skills in communicating in languages other than English while working in global or cross-cultural environments;
- ability to use information from different sources around the world;
- values and perspectives of respect and concern for other cultures, peoples, and global realities.

The aforecited outlines four target dimensions of global competence that people need to apply successfully in their everyday life:

1) understanding the issues and processes of local, global and cultural significance and their interconnection (e.g., poverty, economic interdependence, migration, inequality, environmental risks, conflicts, cultural differences and stereotypes);

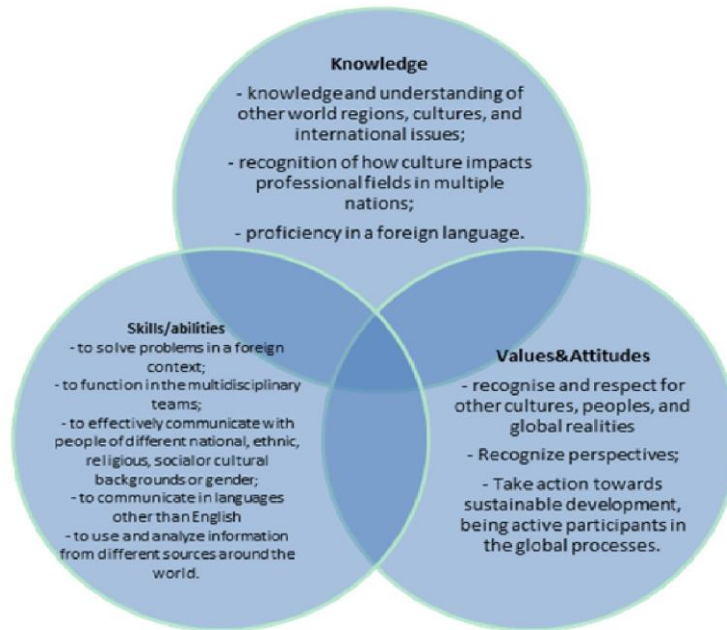
2) understanding and appreciating different ideas, perspectives and world views;

3) the ability to effectively communicate with people of different national, ethnic, religious, social or cultural backgrounds or gender; and

4) the capacity to take constructive action toward sustainable development and collective well-being.

The most recent and the most complete definition we consider the one given by the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) for PISA 2018 (Programme for International Student Assessment). It states that “global competence is the capacity to examine local, global and intercultural issues, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures, and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development” [5, p. 7].

Thus, based on the completed research we can conclude that there are numerous definitions of global competence possible depending on the field it is going to be used in and the target audience. However, all of the definitions are based on the knowledge, skills and values, which are common for any globally competent individual. Having analyzed the abovementioned sources, we can propose a figure in which all three dimensions of global competence are presented (Fig. 1):



*Fig. 1. Three dimensions of global competence*

**Discussion.** Therefore, taking into account the above-mentioned definitions we can see how the concept evolves, singling out not only intercultural awareness and effective communication in the international environment but also the understanding of current and past historical, political and economic events in order to find solutions to local and global problems. The latter is represented in the definition offered by the Global Competence Task Force, a group of state education agency leaders, education scholars, and practitioners: “global competence is the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance” [3, p. 13].

However, preparing students for successful living in the modern global world requires not only that we think about what issues for students to learn, but also what methods of teaching will prove most effective in forming their global competence.

**Conclusion.** In conclusion, we can sum up that the concept of global competence is constantly changing and evolving depending on the current challenges the world faces, the course of development of the nations and the demands of the society. It is impossible to give the only definition of global competence, however. The concept is still being studied and the new dimensions are being added as more and more scholars are taking interest in studying an individual’s global competence.

Therefore, forming students’ global competence in higher education institutions is becoming a trend and is being pursued by numerous countries around the world. Ukraine, as one of the

participants in the globalization process, is also exposed to this influence. However, the world is constantly changing, and scholars must conduct further research in the field of global education, analyze the experience of other countries and its implementation in Ukrainian education.

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## ПОНЯТТЯ ГЛОБАЛЬНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ ТА ЇЇ ОСНОВНІ СКЛАДОВІ

**Анотація.** Метою статті є аналіз та систематизація наукових поглядів на сутність та змістове наповнення глобальної компетентності особистості з огляду на виклики, які постали перед сучасним суспільством. Застосовано такі основні методи: аналіз, синтез, узагальнення – для висвітлення сутності поняття «глобальна компетентність» та формування висновків. Ураховуючи відмінності у розумінні глобальної компетентності світовими ученими, розглянуто різні категорії, включені до досліджуваного поняття (відповідні знання, вміння, цінності). Глобальну компетентність визначено як сукупність базових знань, умінь та цінностей, необхідних для успішної життєдіяльності, щоб розуміти міжнародні проблеми та взаємодіяти у різних людських сферах у різних мовних та культурних середовищах. Окреслено чотири основні здатності, що визначають основу глобальної компетентності особистості (здатність до критичного вивчення світу за межами найближчого оточення індивіда; здатність до бачення й усвідомлення власних перспектив та перспектив інших людей, враховуючи зростання ролі культурної взаємодії і різноманітності у сучасному світі; здатність до ефективної міжособистісної та міжкультурної взаємодії (з використанням сучасних технологій у тому числі); здатність до активної участі в глобальних процесах в умовах сталого розвитку суспільства). Зазначено, що сучасний глобально компетентний студент повинен знати історію власної країни, її культуру, традиції та цінувати інші культури, знаходити спільну мову з іншими представниками соціуму, беручи до уваги специфіку їх культурних норм, а також усвідомлювати складність і багатогранність суспільних процесів у світі, аналізувати та встановлювати зв'язок між історичними подіями, сучасними світовими економічними та соціальними явищами. Наголошено, що студенти повинні усвідомлювати власну унікальність та діяти в соціумі у такий спосіб, щоб не обмежувати унікальність і свободу самовираження інших людей.

**Ключові слова:** глобальна компетентність, здатності особистості, життєдіяльність особистості, міжособистісна взаємодія, міжкультурна взаємодія.

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