

## Компетентнісний підхід у журналістській освіті: західний досвід та вітчизняна практика

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У статті представлено компетентнісний підхід до журналістської освіти в умовах трансформації журналістського фаху. Дигіталізація медіагалузі, конвергенція функцій та завдань у царині комунікативних професій, посилення медіавпливів та медіаефектів спричинили потребу ревізії журналістської освіти. Звернення до компетенції як до засадничого поняття теорії освіти дозволило актуалізувати той набір знань, вмінь, професійних якостей та цінностей, що складають базову модель журналістської професії. Відповідно до класичної моделі З. Вайшенберга, журналістська компетенція як цільова функція журналістської освіти має складну архітектуру і інтегрує чотири складники: фахову компетенцію, комунікаційну компетенцію, спеціальні/галузеві знання та соціальну орієнтованість. Кожна зі стрижневих компетенцій під впливом нових умов реалізації фаху трансформується, змінюється їх питома вага. Так, інструментальні навички зазнають змін під впливом партисипативних журналістських моделей. Журналістика співучасті потребує зовсім іншого алгоритму контентовиробництва. Вона передбачає навички верифікації інформації, взаємодії з дописувачами-аматорами та можновладцями, які залучаються до розв'язання проблем різної масштабності та спрямування, спілкування з активною аудиторією, що обумовлюється посиленням чинника зворотного зв'язку у комунікації. Водночас більшої ваги набуває знанневий сегмент журналістської компетенції у зв'язку із виникненням цілого блоку медіаорієнтованих дисциплін: медіапсихології, медіаекономіки, медіаправа тощо. Посилюється аналітична складова журналістського фаху, спричинена новими інформаційними запитамі і потребами суспільства. Актуалізується потреба у медіамаркетингових знаннях, що набувають нового змісту та орієнтирів унаслідок переходу медіа на цифрову платформу. Вагомим складником компетентнісної моделі стають також проактивні компетенції, що дозволяють журналістам безперервно адаптуватися до змін у медіагалузі.

**Ключові слова:** журналістська освіта; компетенція; компетентнісний підхід; мас-медіа.

### 1. Introduction

**Problem statement.** Changes in the society, which over the last decades have increasingly affected the information and communication spheres, lead to powerful technological and social shifts, put journalism in the face of new challenges and expectations. The digitalization of the industry, the transformation of the social role of journalists, who increasingly assume atypical functions, the intensification of media influences and media effects in general, all these aspects make us reconsider traditional approaches to journalistic profession. It is quite natural to begin such a revision from the field of journalism education, from the analysis of those professional competencies that future journalists acquire in higher education.

Discussions on institutional forms, content priorities, methods and approaches to journalism education have been going on for many years. Moreover, they are global in nature, because professional and functional identification of journalists is a transnational problem: in a globalized society, national traditions of journalism are gradually being neglected. Therefore, the optimal model of journalism education as the

desire of developed societies, which care for their own information space, becomes a topic “without borders.”

Understanding of the nature of competencies lies not only in theoretical discourse, but also in the applied field, awareness of their structure, mechanism and conditions for acquiring, adjustment, complementation, as well as identification of the sets of competencies in accordance with professional tasks will allow to develop an effective system of journalism education.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** In each specific period of the media industry formation, media companies put forward different requirements for journalists constantly updating them, and thus the idea of the normative content of journalism education changed.

**Purpose of the paper.** The purpose of the study is to characterize the transformation process of the basic competency model of journalism education under the influence of technological and social changes in journalistic profession.

**Research object.** The object of the study is a journalism competency model in terms of its current transformations.

**Research methods.** In the process of study, the method of comparative analysis to identify and characterize national peculiarities of journalism competency was applied. Vertical and

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horizontal changes in the model of journalism competencies were examined with the help of retrospective analysis. The systematization method was successfully applied to put in order multiple changes that affected the media industry and transformed the journalistic profession, creating new professional competencies. Each information technology milestone created new competencies for journalistic profession.

At the end of the twentieth century, much emphasis was placed on the market functioning of the media, and thus media marketing and media promotional components of journalism competency were updated. At the beginning of the new millennium, transformation of the media due to the introduction of digital technologies necessitated the introduction of instrumental skills. "Journalistic" courses in many Western educational programs were replaced by "journalism" ones, which had a more applied and functional character.

In the Ukrainian scientific discourse, the theme of journalism education was developed in synchrony with the changes that took place in the globalized Ukrainian media industry.

At the beginning of the XXI century the necessity of changes in journalism education was described by the scholars in the key of information and digital revolution, considering media convergence process, which determined the corresponding set of competencies (V. Demchenko) [1].

V. Rizun consistently defended the idea of university journalism education as opposed to other forms of acquiring journalistic profession. From his point of view, it is in the university environment that the national and professional identity of the journalist is formed, and their communication and analytical competencies are developed [2].

S. Kvit problematized the quality of journalism education, referring to the "underdevelopment and distortion of the media market itself," which causes "the editorial inertia in defining the image of a contemporary journalist" [3]. The researcher also questioned the phenomenon of alternative journalism education, whose experience is quite successful in Western countries and quite problematic in our media environment. A qualitative leap in the formation of journalism education S. Kvit linked to the formation of media as a civilized business [3].

B. Nosova pointed out that "journalism education should train professionals who will be able to work in the decentralized communities" [4, p. 58]. And L. Marina wrote about performativity as a basis for acquiring journalism competencies [5].

N. Sheremeta emphasized the linguistic and communicative competency of journalism students, which they have to master in the globalized society for the effective functioning of the state [6]. In particular, she pointed to the "ability to regulate speech activity regarding normative positions in accordance with the terms and conditions of communication" and the ability to "promote Ukrainian as a state language and find ways to counteract the distorted language" [6, p.257].

L. Khomenko-Semenova wrote about inappropriateness of the development and implementation of the universal journalism model at universities, emphasizing the need to develop competencies of different specializations [7].

The problem of journalism competencies leveling under the influence of an aggressive environment was also pointed out by researchers Z. Khubetsov, S. Korkonosenko and I. Blokhin. They

noted that "Instrumental skills, if they aren't supported by fundamental pedagogical ideas, can be easily reformulated, combined with technologies of other professional fields, if not entirely changed" [8, p. 109].

## 2. Results

The term "competence" has been actively used since the end of the twentieth century in connection with staff training and development. Every country in the world has its own way to competency-based approach in education in general and in journalism education in particular. For example, in Germany the term "competency" was adopted after the reunification of German Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic, when they faced with the problem that graduate journalists at the East German labour market, who had sufficient formal qualification, hardly corresponded to requirements of the West German market. In Ukraine, competence approach to education was formed in the context of integration into the European educational space and in connection with the Bologna Process.

The term "competence" doesn't have an established interpretation in the educational paradigm. More often it is treated as a certain "ability" (Edelmann, Roth, Mead). In the constructivist sense, "competency" is the basis of all actions of a certain specialist. The kinds of competencies have one thing in common - they relate to the human abilities that arise from the interaction of action and thinking. Competency is the objective function of education, and competencies are its substantive components. According to the law "On Higher Education," "competency is the ability of a person to successfully socialize, learn, pursue a professional activity that arises on the basis of a dynamic combination of knowledge, skills, ways of thinking, views, values, other personal qualities" [9]. Actually, this definition was used as a working one in our study.

The competency-based approach in education is also interpreted variably. Taking the definitions proposed by researchers E. Zeera, A. Pavlova, E. Simanyuk, N. Pobirchenko, Y. Rybalka, V. Serikov, G. Selevko, A. Khutorskyas as a basis, we get an integrated functional and meaningful idea about it: the background of a competency-based approach is a dynamic set of knowledge, skills, professional qualities and moral outlook that are used by a specialist in performing professional tasks.

As the German researcher E. Nowak rightly points out, competency is not a static formation, as a person dynamically develops it by analyzing their surrounding and actions, putting this analysis into terms and subsequently turning them into functional actions [10]. She points to the variability of competencies required for each journalistic task, and states that certain competencies can be reached only by mastering competencies from other levels [10].

In this connection, we can say that the theory of journalism education should take into account different levels of competencies, consider the dynamics of their acquisition in the course of training, correlate with the set of functions and tasks that a graduate journalist will perform in practice.

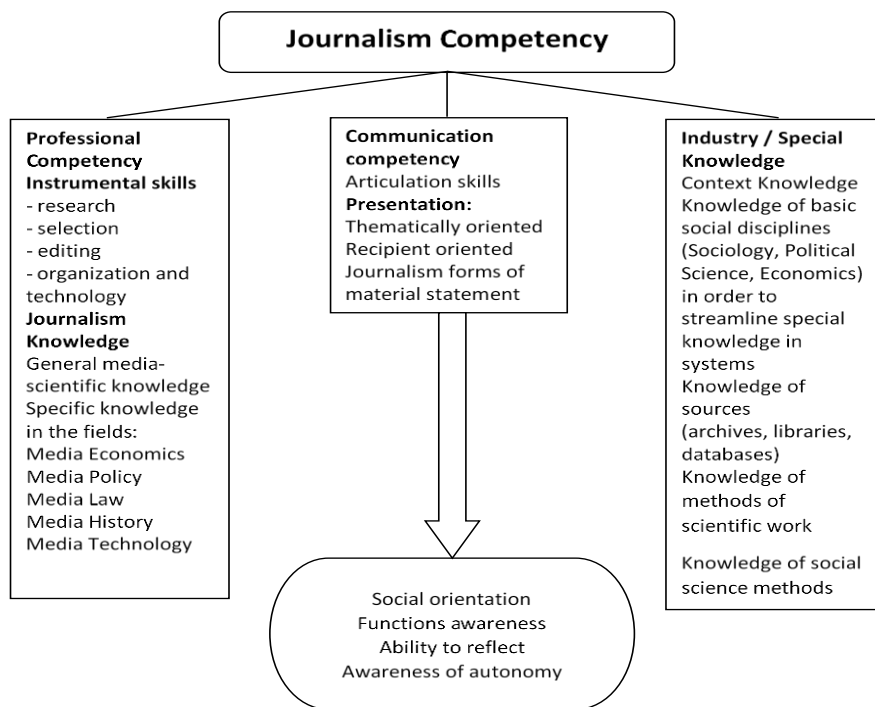
The competency-based approach in education, included in the training of journalists, is at the forefront in the European countries. It is largely implemented in Germany, a country where journalism education is characterized by a high level of

academicism. At the same time, the expansion of out-of-university forms of journalism have become evident recently, displacing traditional approaches to education and reforming the idea of normative journalism competencies.

Traditional journalism education in Germany is based on the model of Z. Weischenberg given below.

will contribute to a more active promotion of scientific achievements in various fields. Taking into consideration the extremely low level of scientific journalism in Ukraine, this competency could also be useful for our graduates.

“Social orientation,” according to Z. Weischenberg, defines university journalism education. It includes a reflexive



**Pic. 1 Journalism Competency Model by Z. Weischenberg**

As we can see, the three core horizontals of competencies interact within the framework of journalism competency, with an absolute emphasis on the medium (mediation) direction of the journalistic activity.

Thus, professional competency is related to the type of communication, industry / special knowledge fills it with sense. With the help of communication competency, which integrates two competencies mentioned above, the journalist's professional functioning is in effect.

Apparently, professional competency includes two blocks of skills: instrumental skills that in a professional environment are often associated with crafts and knowledge ones that guide the journalists to obtain the data from other scientific fields, representing media in different perspectives and cognitive systems. In the structure of journalism competency, Z. Weischenberg assigns a special role to industry / special knowledge. Considering that journalism is a dynamic profession, sensitive to informational, technological and socio-cultural changes in the society, Z. Weischenberg provides here two types of knowledge: contextual, which is continuously acquired by a journalist immersed in a certain society, and fundamental one, which allows the journalist to arrange the array of special knowledge regarding the paradigms of sociology, political science, economics, etc. For the same purpose, future journalist must master a set of basic scientific methods in the field of social science and humanities. This will allow him to process empirical data for further journalistic representation in the media discourse. In addition, it is supposed that scientific knowledge

component and forces graduates to reflect on their social responsibility, to be aware of media influences, to act as critics and controllers of the government and society. The ability to work autonomously implies the ability to see themselves in the profession realistically, adequately perceive its challenges and transformations.

Z. Weischenberg's model has become fundamental in the German educational space in terms of training programs formation and the discussion of competencies between employers and educators. It is significant that the researcher developed it within the framework of the “Competency and technologies” project carrying out a multi-level survey of experts on effective journalism competencies. The architectonics of the model provided some flexibility and openness to additions in all branches of the competency that was stated. Later, in the 2000s, Ulrich Petzold and Jürgen Dermann supplemented it with professional ethics and journalistic activity skills, dramatic competency and professional socialization.

In our opinion, all these positions have already implicitly been present in the basic model, because the “Social orientation” block foresaw a professional meta-consciousness, which together with the mastered theoretical discourses of socio-humanitarian disciplines, had to come from axiological orientations. Two more competencies have also been integrated into the “Presentation” block.

Researcher Pöttker offers a different view on the journalism competency within the framework of university education. In his opinion, it should be, first and foremost, focused on overcoming

of the “practical shock” of novice journalists. Therefore, the components of such competency provide for “compensation for the shortcomings of the media reality” (cited after: [10]). These include: the ability to structure / expertise; self-analysis / ethics; craft / methodology and media experience (cited after: [10]).

German researchers see an effective response to the powerful dynamics of changes in the media environment by not trying to move faster adding more and more competencies. They consider it to be advisable to develop future journalists with the help of key competencies that will allow them to quickly adapt to changes, recognizing that a proactive path is inappropriate here. It is not possible to anticipate all transformational trends.

It is significant that German researchers distinguish the basic and professional competencies. The former is a prerequisite for the acquisition of the latter. They also warn against the perception of the journalistic profession as purely creative, since the proportion of the actual text-making is significantly inferior to the research and organizational work. It is also noteworthy that the competency focus is on the team nature of the journalist’s work and the need for effective communication.

It is worth noting that, in Germany, journalism education traditionally exists in different institutional forms. We will not focus on the directions of the journalistic profession acquisition, as this is not the topic of our research. Instead, let us pay attention to the current competencies provided by the educational programs of the various educational institutions.

Klaus Meyer, Professor of Journalism at the Eichstadt-Ingolstadt Catholic University (Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt) [11] believes that while maintaining a competent background that has developed throughout the history of journalism, new aspects of a journalist’s work should also be considered. Among them, he names the ability to communicate with an active audience and interact with users on social media platforms. Indeed, the feedback factor is now gaining ground in the media space. With the transition of the media to the digital platform, the journalist’s functionality is expanded to include not only the competency of text-making, but also the ability to communicate with the recipients of their own media product. The segment of the audience that is active on social networks is also constantly growing and requires not only time resources but also relevant skills.

Klaus Meyer also points to the important role of entrepreneurial competence. It must integrate an understanding of what alternative business models a media house can develop, or how a journalist can create their own media company. To the professor’s point of view, the normative element of professional disciplines should be a research component - systematic monitoring and analysis of trends and phenomena in the media industry, which will allow future journalists to produce their own ideas and visions in media activity. Among the innovative approaches at the Eichstadt-Ingolstadt University, he names the methods of news games, constructive journalism and innovative radio news.

At German universities, the impact of digitalization on journalism is viewed not only in technological terms but also in the context of powerful social influence. It is about the formation of professional immunity against the growing pressure from the

public in the context of media involvement in the political debate.

Considerable attention is also given here to the process information verification. For this purpose, courses, oriented on the ability to identify myths, ideologemes, half-truths; consistently criticize sources of information, communicators and their messages, are introduced.

It is significant that, until the 1970s, journalism was considered a specialty of talented people according to the motto “free, called and gifted”. Talent was considered beyond the scope of competencies as an innate people’s ability that they could not get through training. German schools of journalism also offer their set of competencies, which seek to adapt to the needs of the media industry as effectively as possible. In particular, the Freie Journalistenschule offers to the applicants of journalism education the opportunity to master self-marketing in the context of assimilation of market specificity of journalistic activity, promotion and interaction with different types of audiences, as well as book publishing, which involves converting the ability of journalists to write into creation of projects based on their own results.

Considerable attention is also given here to research competency, which involves mastering the science of media as a broad interdisciplinary field that gives an idea of the spectrum of paradigms and points of view on the media.

German education follows the way of narrow specialization. For example, Freie Journalistenschule offers competency acquisition in 13 different specialized journalism fields, including food journalism, fashion journalism, sports and business journalism.

Famous Springer Academy further extends this competency set by offering to master 15 types of journalistic specializations. These include gonzo journalism, military journalism, data journalism, participatory journalism, medical journalism, judicial journalism and more. According to the EPP (Education Professional Program) of bachelor’s degree in journalism, developed by the Institute of Journalism of T. Shevchenko Kyiv National University on the basis of the current standard, integral competency also involves the process of performing specialized tasks and working under uncertain conditions [12].

Among the educational components we see a number of disciplines that allow mastering thematic specializations: “International journalism,” “Educational journalism,” “Political journalism,” “Religious journalism,” “Legal journalism,” “Sports journalism” and “Science journalism.” However, at regional universities, it is preferable to train universal journalists, which corresponds to a limited resource base.

Comparison of the set of competences offered by Ukrainian specialists with the basic competency model of Z. Weischenberg, allows to distinguish the following professional competencies:

- “Instrumental skills” block: ability to find, process and analyze information from various sources; ability to use information and communication technologies; ability to generate information content; ability to create a media product; ability to conduct professional media activity on cross-media platforms;

- “Journalistic knowledge. Special media-scientific knowledge” block: the ability to apply knowledge in practical

situations; knowledge and understanding of the subject area and understanding of professional activity; ability to apply knowledge of social communications in their professional activity;

- "Communication competency" block: ability to communicate in the state language; ability to communicate in a foreign language;

- "Presentation" block: the ability to exercise their rights and responsibilities as members of the society, to realize the values of civil (free democratic) society and the need for its sustainable development, the rule of law, human and civil rights and freedoms in Ukraine;

- "Industry / Special knowledge" block: ability to apply knowledge of social issues, conflicts, hybrid wars in their professional activities; ability to generate information content in the fields of economy, law, culture and art, social issues, international relations and other activities; ability to create a media product in the sphere of reflection of economic, legal, political, cultural and art issues, social issues, international relations and other activities;

- "Social Orientation" block: the ability to preserve and enhance the moral, cultural, scientific values and achievements of the society based on an understanding of the history and patterns of development of the subject area.

It is also important to point out competencies that imply the ability to professionally develop in a turbulent information environment: the ability to adapt and act in a new situation, and the ability to learn and master modern knowledge.

A special role is given to the competencies of teamwork, which are also fundamental to the journalism profession. At the same time, the block of special journalistic knowledge in the fields of media economics, media policy, media law remains under-represented. Increased attention to the reflective component in journalism education also involves appeal to media critics and media ethics, which play a significant role under the conditions when current journalistic standards are absent and there is need for self-regulation of journalistic activity.

The research component, which would equip future journalists with the knowledge of scientific methods of working with information, conducting constant media monitoring, studying the audience with the help of sociological tools, content analysis of media texts, etc., is not sufficiently represented in the educational program cited above.

At the same time, both the basic model of journalism competency and the list of competencies of the educational program lack a range of competencies that have become required in the labour market in connection with the transformations of the journalistic profession. We are talking about various forms of participatory journalism (human rights journalism, hyperlocal media, crowdsourcing projects, etc.), media catching (the way of cooperation between the press-office and mass media, in which journalists, using databases of e-mail addresses, simultaneously contact many PR specialists for relevant information for the material they are currently working on) [13].

A number of new competencies emerge as a result of transformations of the mass media communication system: updating of the links of key communicators that become a source of information, which needs to be verified (fact-

checking competency), enhancing the role of feedback (competency of communication in social networks), activation of the audience factor (competency in communication with an active audience) etc.

Market conditions of media functioning and their convergence with other communication professions that serve business and politics also lead to the emergence of new journalism competencies: creation and implementation of communication strategy, management of communications, knowledge of the political system of the country, work as a spokesperson, etc. The competencies listed above are offered by the bachelor's education program in journalism at Charles University (Czech Republic).

It may also be productive to provide journalists with competencies in related communication fields - book publishing and cinematography.

The core verticals of Z. Wieschenberg's basic competency model can be supplemented by these competencies. At the same time, changes affect the vertical levels of the model, causing different vectors of specialization in journalistic profession.

### 3. Discussion

The transformations of the basic journalism competency model revealed in the study suggest the need to review educational programs for training journalists. At present the question of the optimal institutional form of journalistic profession acquiring remains debatable. In Western countries, journalism is gradually leaving the academic environment and moving into the field of training and short-term courses. At the same time, the new requirements for a professional journalist greatly complicate and diversify the set of competencies that they must have in order to work productively in the profession. Research, communication, and instrumental competencies are complemented by new sub-competencies that supplement the basic competency model both vertically (by adding new levels of knowledge relevant to the current state of the media industry) and horizontally (through the introduction of numerous industry specializations in journalism).

### 4. Conclusion

As a target function of journalism education, journalism competency has a complex architectonics and matrix structure, which allows it to be updated depending on the changing conditions of the media industry functioning. Integral competency includes sub-competencies, which due to their variational and dynamic combination, enable the specialist to solve the tasks of different types. The adaptability of journalism competency can be achieved through a range of proactive competencies provided by educational programs for training journalists.

At present, the basic model of journalism competency is being transformed as a result of functional changes in the journalistic profession, its technological component and social orientation in particular. In this connection, the set of instrumental skills that serve the algorithm of media production is adjusted. Formation of the participatory models of the journalistic practice leads to an increase in the audience factor and requires broadening the sense of the communication

competency. Active audience and user engagement sub-competencies are emerging. The high level of competition in the media market forces journalists to deal with media promotion issues, which means acquiring knowledge and skills in the field of media marketing and media entrepreneurship.

The research competency of current journalists is being updated due to new demands of the society: information expansion, transformation of messages into communication noise cause new requirements for information processing. Analytical component in the work of a journalist becomes a significant competitive advantage. And constant monitoring of media discourse, application of scientific methods to the analysis contributes to the understanding of the general trends of the media industry and the production of new ideas.

Journalism competency is not only a set of pragmatic competencies that enable a journalist to be competitive in the labour market, but also a capacity for professional self-reflection, which involves assessment of the effects and prolonged media effects in the society.

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## Butyryna M. Competency-based approach to journalism education: Western experience and Ukrainian practice

In the article a competency-based approach to journalism education in the context of journalism transformation is presented. Digitization of the media industry, convergence of the functions and tasks in the field of communicative professions, intensification of media influences and media effects caused the need for journalism education revision. The appeal to competency as a basic term of the theory of education made it possible to update that set of knowledge, skills, professional qualities and values that make up the basic model of the journalistic profession. According to Z. Weischenberg's classical model, journalism competency as a target function of journalism education has complex architectonics and integrates four components: professional competence, communication competence, special / industrial knowledge and social orientation. Each of the core competencies is transformed under the influence of new conditions of the profession realization, their relative importance changes. Thus, instrumental skills are changing under the influence of participatory journalism models. Participatory journalism requires a completely different content production algorithm. It requires the skills of information verification, interaction with amateur contributors and officials, involved in the process of solution of problems of different scales and directions, communication with an active audience, which is driven by an increased feedback factor in communication. At the same time, the knowledge segment of journalism competency becomes more important in connection with the emergence of a whole block of media-oriented disciplines: media psychology, media economics, media law, etc. The analytical component of the journalistic profession, caused by new information inquiries and the needs of the society, is increasing. The need for media marketing knowledge, which is gaining new sense and guidance as a result of the transition of the media to the digital platform, is being updated. Proactive competencies that allow journalists to continuously adapt to changes in the media industry also become a significant component of the competency model.

**Keywords:** *journalism education; competency; competency-based approach; mass-media.*

