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Certain Considerations on Training Tour Guide-Excursionists for Museum Tourism

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A B S T R A C T
This article is devoted to studying the technologies for training tour guides who specialize in museum tourism, as well as organizing and developing museum tourism in Uzbekistan. Recommendations are provided on preparing qualified tour guide-excursionists for museum tourism.

A R T I C L E I N F O

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As times changes, so does human consciousness. For this reason, people's perception of museum exhibits has also begun to shift. Museum are increasingly becoming places where leisure time can be spent in engaging and meaningful ways. This is undoubtedly the result of the introduction of modern technologies into museum practices.

It is well known that without the help of a guide, it is quite difficult for an average visitor to independently understand and familiarize themselves with museum exhibits. The interpretation of what is seen depends entirely on the visitor's personal perception. New innovative technologies that help convey the essence of expositions more fully have recently become one of the key new developments in museum life.

Raising the quality of museums to a new level is important. The integration of innovative technologies that serve to increase visitor interest produces effective consequences in museum management. Many issues related to the development of museum tourism are directly associated with the training of tour guides. Therefore, it is necessary to first study the essence and content of guiding and excursion services.

The word excursion derives from the Latin excursion - meaning a short trip or journey, to travel, to go on a trip and return. According to the conclusions of the renowned Russian scholar B.V.Emelyanov, an excursion is the process of seeing and sensing the surrounding world through one's eyes. It is also a purposeful process of perceiving natural and material environments by observing and sensing them. Before the term tourism even emerged, humans already possessed curiosity about the surrounding world : what lies in the distance, beyond mountains, rivers, and hills. This accumulation of questions naturally drove them into travel – into journeys motivated by an inner feeling of curiosity and discovery.

Today, we may conclude that perhaps not a single person in the world has never gone on a trip, walk, or excursion. The main driving force behind such explorations has always been the biological diversity, uniqueness, and richness of nature. Early journeys were primarily motivated by the desire to learn about

other lands and the world beyond one's homeland.

Excursions are often described as the heart of tourism. Indeed, once a tourist settles into accommodation, the first activity they usually engage in is an excursion. In all countries, excursion tourism holds a leading position within domestic tourism. In this context, it is important to distinguish between a "tourist" and an "excursionist," as their needs and service expectations differ significantly.

A tourist is an individual who, without engaging in paid activities, travels outside their permanent residence for purposes such as recreation, education, or professional practice for a duration not exceeding one year.

An excursionist, on the other hand, is a short-term visitor who does not stay overnight and spends no more than 24 hours on an excursion route. Tourism develops depending on the quality and organization of excursion services (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. The Main Activities of an Excursion.

In addition to this, the technological and service levels of tourism services depend greatly on the organization of guided excursions. A tour operator or guide-interpreter must clearly understand and master the goals and tasks of excursion tourism. Correctly identifying the goals and tasks of an excursion ensures visitor satisfaction and positive emotional experiences, which in turn enhances the reputation and competitiveness of the tourism company.

Excursions may be conducted for groups or individuals. The number of participants influences the nature of the excursion. The process consists of demonstration and narration. If demonstration is removed, narration becomes a lecture. For instance, listening to a lecture about nature may teach facts but will not evoke emotional experiences or appreciation of biodiversity.

The goals of excursions are diverse: fostering patriotism, love of labor, aesthetic and ecological education; presenting cultural and historical heritage; explaining ancient and modern technologies, clothing, lifestyles, transportation means; demonstrating biodiversity, climate changes, and more. Due to the wide scope of these aims, excursions contribute significantly to human intellectual and moral development.

Every profession requires knowledge and experience. The profession of a tour guide is no exception — it demands mastery of various interdisciplinary skills, practical experience, and professional education. In Uzbekistan, the role of guides is variously referred to as "guide-interpreter," "tour leader," "guide-excursionist," or "guide-presenter," although the term "guide" is not limited to tourism alone.

We study the guiding activity in tourism and its professional requirements through the works of prominent Russian scholars. Due to high quality and comprehensiveness of their textbooks and instructional manuals, these materials are taught as core specialized subjects in the field of tourism. In dictionaries published in Uzbekistan, the definitions of " guide " and " guide-interpreter-excursionist " are provided based on translations of the works of Russian researchers.

A guide (from French guide — leader) is a representative of a tourist bureau who shows tourists sites of

interest, explains historical information, and introduces visitors to the cultural and historical attractions of a city or region.

A guide-interpreter accompanies foreign tourists throughout their route, participates directly in service provision, manages financial settlements, conducts independent excursions, speaks several foreign languages, answers tourist inquiries, and gives suggestions. Based on professional experience, guides are classified into three categories, from third to first.

A guide-interpreter is a specialist who provides translation services in non-tourism production processes, in communication between people speaking different languages, in collaborative activities, in the operations of joint enterprises, in contract-related matters, and so forth. In our national tourism sector, it is essential to adopt a single term-guide-excursionist and become accustomed to its proper usage. This is because interpretation is not required from guides in domestic tourism. The terms guide-leader and guide-presenter generate considerably more ambiguity compared to the term guide-excursionist within the tourism sphere.

The responsibility of a guide-excursionist in tourism is extremely high. They must provide clear, accurate, and engaging information about tourism objects, many of which are unfamiliar to visitors. Therefore, strict requirements are set for guide competency:

1. Intellectual capacity
2. Confidence in knowledge and decisiveness
3. Communication skills
4. Professional mastery
5. Organizational abilities
6. Broad worldview
7. Cultural awareness
8. Knowledgeability
9. Analytical skills

Uzbek scholars propose evaluating guides using the following criteria:

1. Appearance, experience, availability of modern equipment
2. Strong knowledge and professionalism
3. Informational awareness and cooperation
4. High social behavior standards
5. Age of at least 20 ; for those with 3 years of experience, not exceeding 50

Personal qualities required of guides include pleasant appearance, attentiveness, strong memory, creativity, quick decision-making, organizational talent, self-confidence, broad worldview, correct pronunciation, and rich vocabulary.

This profession is not recommended for individuals with cardiovascular diseases, mental or nervous disorders, or speech/physical impairments.

Strict adherence to the requirements mentioned above is essential in training tour guides for the international direction of museum tourism. This is because professionally trained museum tourism guides serve as key interpreters who convey to tourists that our homeland is one of the ancient centers of human civilization, endowed with a unique culture of ethics, refined artistic creativity, and a rich historical heritage. They are responsible for presenting and explaining the exhibits and expositions that reflect these values, as well as showcasing the diverse national heritage preserved in our museums.

Training guides for Uzbekistan's domestic museum tourism is considered relatively easier. For example, teachers of subjects such as history, geography, zoology, biology, and botany in our schools can effectively act as guides for student groups in museums specializing in these fields. However, for museums that demonstrate national arts and crafts—particularly those that require explaining the history

of traditional handicraft production, its current state, and the extent of its preservation or decline—it is essential to train dedicated domestic museum guides.

Therefore, it is also necessary to train museum-specialized guides for Uzbekistan's international museum tourism. Based on our conclusions, preparing guides with expertise in specific types of museums will serve as a solid foundation for the effective development of international museum tourism in Uzbekistan (Figure 2). The national cultural heritage of our people encompasses various directions, each unique and non-repetitive. For instance, the field of "traditional handicrafts" alone requires an international museum guide to thoroughly master the following areas of craftsmanship found in our national heritage:

1. Traditional carpentry and its associated branches.



Figure 2. Training International Tour Guides According to Museum Types and Specializations

2. National pottery and its branches.

3. National embroidery and its branches (such as zardozi gold embroidery, guldozi floral embroidery), as well as national garments (traditional robes, national doppi caps, silk weaving—atlas, bakmal, bekasam—and the various directions of tailoring, among others).

4. National carpet weaving and the directions of palos (flat-weave) production.

Within the listed fields of craftsmanship, there exist additional sub-branches. For example, the art of woodcarving (crafts) comprises six schools—Khiva, Bukhara, Samarkand, Urgut, Tashkent, and Fergana. Embroidery, pottery, and carpet weaving likewise contain between four and ten distinct branches each. Therefore, in the context of international museum tourism, it is essential that we train international tour guides who are thoroughly knowledgeable about the history, techniques, and technologies of all branches of traditional craftsmanship within our national heritage.

Duties of a museum tourism guide such a guide must :

- Know the geography, types, main exhibits, and expositions of Uzbekistan's museums
- Understand domestic and international museum tourism routes
- Be able to assess museum tourism resources and excursion objects
- Develop new museum tourism routes and excursions
- Respond promptly to changes in the museum-tourism service market
- Master modern methods of conducting excursions

- Skillfully manage museum tourism routes
- Promote museum tourism products

Guides prepared for international museum tourism are evaluated according to their ability to perform these tasks.

Conclusion and Recommendations

- Guides trained for international museum tourism must be capable of presenting Uzbekistan as one of the ancient centers of civilization and explaining the unique cultural and artistic heritage represented in museum exhibits.
- Guides must thoroughly master the history, techniques, and technologies of all branches of national craftsmanship that constitute Uzbekistan's culture heritage.
- For domestic museum tourism, short-term specialized training courses are sufficient to prepare guides.

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