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## Internationalization of Higher Pedagogical Education

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### Abstract

The study reveals the problem of higher education internationalisation. Definitions of the main concept “internationalisation” presented by various researchers are given. Also different criteria of a modern university’s degree of internationalizing are presented in the study. The main aim is to design a model of internationalization strategy applicable in the Russian institution of higher pedagogical education. We take the German Strategy as an example. Germany is the country that attracts students from all over the world and actively participates in the process of higher education internationalisation. The paper may present interest for the researchers studying integration processes in the sphere of higher education, Comparative or Foreign Pedagogics and for the universities’ international departments’ staff.

Keywords: higher pedagogical education, integration, internationalisation, academic mobility, strategy.

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## **Introduction**

With the growing integration of the global economy, countries have to be competitive, particularly in the field of higher education. Preparing a future teacher in this context becomes especially important. The process of internationalization of higher education outlines new demands on the preparation of a modern teacher, who must be ready for international dialogue, growing international contacts and possess a certain set of relevant competencies.

Internationalization of higher education has various forms: joint educational programs, double degree programs, foreign affiliates, academic mobility of students and teachers, and programs of cooperation with foreign universities. At the same time, the training of pedagogical personnel faces a certain problem: despite the present-day requirements, teacher education is slowly moving towards internationalization. This is primarily due to the fact that historically the teacher had to meet the set of requirements of a particular locality or the country as a whole, which initially contradicted any kind of integration processes. The teacher carries the characteristics of his or her country and must be prepared for activities in a particular country. In other words, the process of preparing a teacher is of a national character. Therefore, the process of internationalization itself is a difficult task for higher pedagogical education.

Many foreign universities have internationalization strategies, which indicate the quantitative and qualitative indicators that these universities orient upon in the process of cooperation with universities in other countries. Creating a similar strategy in Russian pedagogical universities will facilitate their entry into the global process of internationalization of higher education.

The purpose of this study is to develop a model of internationalization strategy applicable in the institution of higher pedagogical education.

We have studied the main approaches to the definition of the key concept of “internationalization”. Since the 1990s, this concept has been firmly included in the scientific revolution, and today there are many interpretations of this concept (Scott, 2005; Liferov, 1999; Pirogov, 2015; Knight, 1997) and others. However, in this study, we adhere to the definition given by the American scientist Knight (2003).

In this research, we studied the main components of the internationalization process, as well as the features of this process in the field of higher pedagogical education. There are a number of factors that inhibit the entry of teacher education into the process of internationalization of world higher education. Having set a goal to create a model of the university internationalization strategy, we studied the experience of the world's leading universities that have their own internationalization strategies, and identified a number of key components that can become the basis for creating an internationalization strategy in Russian pedagogical universities.

## **Methodological framework**

The theoretical basis of the study is the conceptual position of scientific research in the field of studying the problems of internationalization of higher pedagogical education. An integrated approach allowed us to consider the process of internationalization in the unity of its components and forms. We used analytical and systemic methods in studying various approaches to the definition of the concept of “internationalization” and the features of this process in higher education. The system approach allowed us to study the experience of a number of foreign universities, which have their own strategy of internationalization, and to highlight a number of key points applicable at the Russian higher teacher training school.

## Results

There are many interpretations of the term “internationalization”. The interpretation of this term by Jane Knight (1997) seems to be the most comprehensive for many researchers today: internationalization is “the process of introducing an international dimension into such educational functions as teaching, research, and the provision of services”. Later, the author clarifies that internationalization is the process of introducing the international aspect into the research, educational and service functions of higher education (Knight, 2003). Knight (2005) believes that internationalization is a consequence of globalization. According to Scott (2005), internationalization of higher education is a reaction to the globalization of the labor market. Internationalization is a more “positive” variant of integration, since it involves cooperation, dialogue between the countries, exchange of students and teaching staff, joint research and development, while preserving the unique characteristics of a particular country. Yemelyanova and Sokolova (2015) believe that internationalization “preserves national and cultural features, enhanced by attracting international measure in the activities of the actors of the educational system”.

According to Pirogov (2015), internationalization of education is the organization of the educational process, involving the cooperation of national educational institutions through joint educational and research activities with the aim of developing the freedom of one person.

Liferov (1999) defines internationalization as a process of international orientation of universities; international education, which includes a range of different programs for students; integration of the international aspect into the educational, research and other functions of the university.

In the “Concept of export of educational services of the Russian Federation for the period 2011-2020” (The Ministry of Education and Science, 2009) internationalization of higher education is interpreted as “a process occurring at the national, sectoral and institutional levels, with which goals, functions and organization of the provision of educational services acquire international dimension”. According to the Federal Law “On Education in Russian Federation” (The State Duma, 2012), the international cooperation of educational institutions is implemented in the following areas:

1. Joint development of educational and scientific programs.
2. Individual mobility of students and staff from organizations for the training and improvement of scientific and educational activities.
3. Joint implementation of scientific and innovative projects.
4. Participation in the creation and development of educational networks.
5. Participation in the activities of international organizations, in the organization of international educational events (conferences, seminars, etc.), in the exchange of educational and scientific literature.

Dubovitska (2013) gives the following quantitative criteria for evaluating foreign activities of universities:

- a) criteria for evaluating the international research activities, such as the number of international scientific conferences / grants / scientific articles published in international journals belonging to indexed databases; the number of invited foreign specialists;
- b) criteria for assessing the internationalization of the learning process, such as the number of curricula in foreign languages, the number / share of foreign students, the proportion of graduates who have double degrees to the total number of graduates (Dubovitska, 2013).

Analyzing the abovementioned criteria, it becomes clear why many researchers connect the internationalization of education with the commercial interests of universities. International cooperation

contributes to the growth of financial income by attracting foreign students to paid tuition and improving the quality of education and research by the participation of students and teachers in the international knowledge sharing process. The Strategy of innovative development of Russian Federation until 2020 (The Government of Russian Federation, 2011) emphasizes the need for the development of the educational services quality, increase of educational services export, increase of the foreign students number, as well as an increase in the number of universities that are included in the world's top 200 universities (Quacquarelli Symonds World University Rankings, n.d.) from one to four by 2020. Thus, it is evident that today we have a market of educational services, where universities offer a certain set of financial products.

Philip Altbach, professor, director of the Boston College Center for International Higher Education in the United States and Jane Knight, an associate professor at the Institute of Higher Education at the University of Toronto in Canada, have devoted a lot of research to the problems of internationalizing higher education. They emphasize that international academic mobility is studied in the context of trade relations, as it brings greater profit to universities (Altbach & Knight, 2007). In this sense, they talk about academic capitalism, where the university and its employees appear as participants of market relations (Rhoades & Slaughter, 2004).

Altbach (2002), in particular, repeatedly mentions that education in a globalizing world becomes a profitable good. However, he himself considers such an approach to be incorrect, since education is, above all, the culture of a country, and in relation to culture the rules of market do not work (Altbach, 2002).

According to the OECD, in 2013, approximately 4 million students studied outside their home country. The United States is the most popular direction – about 784.500 students are enrolled in the US universities. In terms of outbound mobility, China was the leader – 763.500 students studied in foreign universities. The OECD predicts an increase in international mobility from 3.7 to 6.4 million students by 2025. Germany in its turn plans to achieve a goal of 350 000 foreign students by 2020, China – 500 000, Canada – 450 000, Japan – 300 000 (Deutsches Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung, 2016).

UNESCO presents the following data: since 2000, the number of mobile students in Europe has doubled – from 950 000 to 1.8 million students in 2013. 52% of these students come from non-European countries. Britain is the most attractive European destination (127 500 students in 2013), followed by Germany (77 500), Austria (58 000) and France (56 500). Germany is also the leader in outbound mobility: 104 000 students in 2013, next comes France (62 500), Italy (42 000), Russia (38 000) and Ukraine (37 500).

The importance of the process of internationalization of higher pedagogical education is obvious. Modern teachers should be ready to introduce their students to the global dimension.

Germany is an example of a country that attracts students from all over the world and has the most balanced level of academic mobility. One of the normative acts of the federal level in Germany is the Internationalisation Strategy of Education, Science and Research (The Federal Government of Germany, n.d.), which we take as an example in this study.

The basic criteria determining the process of internationalization in a modern university are:

- international cooperation (conferences, joint publications, network projects, partner universities ),
- university positions in world rankings,
- double / joint degree programs,
- number of foreign students,

- academic mobility of students.

Russian universities do not have a unified strategy of internationalisation applicable to all universities. Some universities include the abovementioned indicators in their development programs. Academic mobility of students is one of the priority areas for the implementation of the State Program of the Russian Federation “Development of Education” for 2013-2020 (The Government of Russian Federation, 2014). One of the subprograms of this project is the development of vocational education, in particular higher education. It is expected that by 2020, the proportion of foreign students will increase from 2.3% in 2011 to 10% in 2020.

Assistance in the development of student mobility will also be a project for leading universities in Russia to become one of the world's top 100 universities, as the government plans to stimulate university projects related to internationalization financially, and this will also promote the exchange of students and teachers, internships, conferences abroad (Shakirova & Valeeva, 2016). The state program provides the universities receiving annual additional subsidies of up to 1 billion rubles for the implementation of these projects. The entry of Russian universities into the top 100 list will also help to improve the reputation of universities at the world level, increase their attractiveness for foreign students, which ultimately will improve the indicators of the number of visiting students. This will strengthen the position of Russian education in the global market of educational services and of Russia as a whole in the world arena.

A new project designed to raise the attractiveness and competitiveness of Russian education on the international educational services market was the project “Development of the Export Potential of the Russian Education System” (Presidium of the Presidential Council for Strategic Development and Priority Projects, 2017). This project sets new specific tasks related to the internationalisation in Russia:

- the number of foreign students enrolled full-time at Russian universities will increase from 220 000 in 2017 to 710 000 in 2025 ;
- improving the regulatory framework on the appointment and training of foreign students and the recognition of foreign education certificates;
- development of new forms of joint educational programs and programs in English, online education for foreigners, summer training programs for foreigners;
- the creation of international services to support foreign students.

In spite of the existing programs, the creation of a unified strategy of internationalization at the federal level would help universities to have a guide with real indicators that they can use and aim at. We think the internationalization model should primarily include:

- common vision of internationalization of higher pedagogical education,
- strategic goals,
- key indicators,
- instructions on performance of indicators, with deadlines and possible results,
- responsible staff,
- funding.

Modern higher pedagogical institutions cannot stand apart from the process of internationalization. Currently, state funding for many universities is declining, and therefore the university management is forced to seek other sources of funding. This causes increased competition among universities. Image issues, the prestige of the university are now more relevant than ever. Whether a student will get a good job after graduation or not depends on the choice of a university. This is especially true when a student plans to work abroad after receiving a degree. Today, universities are evaluated

according to a number of criteria that determine their rating and image. Unified strategy of internationalization of pedagogical universities have specific indicators and criteria in order to remain competitive and strive for intercultural dialogue with foreign universities.

### Conclusions

This study aimed to develop a strategy for the internationalization of institutions of higher pedagogical education. To achieve the goal, research works on the problem of integration processes in the field of higher pedagogical education, as well as various approaches to defining the key concept of “internationalization” and the experience of foreign universities on creating a university internationalization strategy, were studied. The goal has been achieved. The materials presented in the study may be useful for teachers of foreign and comparative pedagogy and for scientists dealing with the problems of integration processes and internationalization in the field of higher education.

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