

## SKILL CONVERSION: THE LIFE-LONG FOREIGN-LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN THE SYSTEM OF CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

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**Abstract:** The new socio-economic and political situations require the implementation of a language policy in the field of language education aimed at satisfying both public and personal needs. With the implementation of the new language policy, the creation of a flexible system of languages and the conditions for their study, as well as a variation of forms and means of teaching, reflects the current state of the theory and practice of teaching a foreign language. In this regard, the foreign language in the system of continuing professional education has acquired a broad scale. The purpose of this study is to systematize the experience of creating a model of life-long foreign-language education in the system of continuing professional education, describing it through the prism of theoretical and methodological approaches. The model needs to be characterized, firstly, to comprehend what was done and outline the next steps in improving the system, and secondly, it will be useful for managers working in continuing professional education. This article can be beneficial for the learners, who prefer to know from which approaches educational programs and courses are built, which they still choose or have already chosen for training.

**Keywords:** continuing professional education, the foreign language program, language policy, further education, theoretical and methodological approaches, second language acquisition, the model of continuous foreign-language education.

### Introduction

Today a foreign language is not a luxury, but a vital necessity. Learning foreign languages in the modern world is the most crucial component in the life of the successful person. Foreign languages are necessary for effective interaction within science and politics, culture and art,

economics and other critical areas of our life. The main point in learning foreign languages is the opportunity to plunge into the world of the mysterious and incomprehensible, the opportunity to communicate with people of another outlook and mentality. Knowledge of foreign languages is now becoming the main professional competence, especially English as the language of international communication, is relevant for all Russian youth, who want to find a good job, to come in contact with the outside world, and to improve their cultural knowledge (Nurutdinova et al., 2018). According to the research, 76% of Russians believe that learning foreign languages is the key to study different culture, tolerance and develop memory, and is the vital component in their future employment, so knowing foreign languages is necessity (Knowledge of foreign languages opens up great opportunities: Russians are convinced, 2008).

It is almost impossible to imagine the life of a modern person who does not know any foreign language because most modern means of communication are aimed at people who know the language to some extent. Knowledge of foreign languages in the age of globalisation is critical. This time is marked by the globalisation of the economy, the integration of political, cultural and economic life, which leads to the strengthening in various fields between countries. All these changes led to a significant increase in the role of foreign languages in society. Knowledge of at least one foreign language expands the horizon, allows to learn more about the culture and customs of another people. Foreign languages are not only the means of communication but also the condition for successful interaction of individuals and various countries under the conditions of economic, political, military and cultural integration (Nurutdinova et al., 2016a).

By the early sixties of the XXth century, the primary political vector is changing: the English language becomes not only the language of research and international communication, but also the language which inextricably linked with the USA. However, it is not yet clear which way the pendulum will swing in the future, though, according to some forecasts, the vector can move towards the Spanish language, on the other - towards the Chinese (Foreign languages and politics, 2008).

Language is now an integral and essential part of human culture in general. Communication and technological transformation in society involved both a direct and indirect communication, which led to the intensification in the need for using foreign languages. Earlier understanding the foreign languages was a crucial component for successful people: such aspect has long been included in questionnaires for HR and commercial establishments. Those who can speak several languages, are wider in scope, the inner world is more vibrant, logic is more perfect. Moreover, if we talk about the image, we cannot disagree with the fact that such people produce the most favourable impression (Tilene, 2011).

In the European linguistic policy, particular attention is paid to the development social and communicative competencies (soft skills) that enable them to become mobile and competitive on the European labour market. According to the European Union developers in the language policy, knowledge of foreign languages in the context of continuous and intensive intercultural interaction is a vital competency and will make Europeans more civilised and open, and the European economy more transparent and legitimate. According to the website of the European Council for Education, the English language is the leading language in the EU countries: 38% of EU residents are fluent in English, 14% in French, 14% in German, 7% in Russian, 5% in Spanish. In the EU countries, a great deal of attention is paid to the question of owning foreign languages, as today people are entering into diverse cultural contacts. There is an increasing number of situations when they are merely forced to speak not in their language: during travel, in the process of interacting with the global economy and the international labour market (Gottlieb, 2009, 2010; Tilene 2011).

The 21<sup>st</sup> century educational system is in the transformation process.

- it is the social changes;

- it is globalization and universalisation of political, cultural and economic life, the emergence of an increasingly unified, interconnected and diverse human civilisation;
- it is the role of information technology in society and production (Filippov, 1999).

Globalisation and internationalisation are inseparably linked, and both processes are in the zone of close scientific attention and are inextricably linked with significant technological and social changes of the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One of the first who turned to the problems of globalisation in the early 90's XX<sup>th</sup> century was the American Sociologist R. Robertson (1992), who defined it as a set of processes that make the social world unified.

For nearly two decades, the term “globalisation” has been used to refer to the growing interdependence of the world - economic, socio-cultural and political (Inozemtsev, 2008). In the last third of the XX<sup>th</sup> century, humanity has found itself in an unknown situation hitherto: the total globalisation of all processes taking place in it and with it. The process of globalization, observed by the whole world, means the emergence of a hybrid world culture, the blending of national traditions, the strengthening of cooperation between nations and is manifested in the unification of the most diverse aspects of people's life – their worldview and outlook, needs and skills, politics and economy, social life and production, science and education, culture and art, religion and language, statehood and way of life, ecology and demography, sport and crime (Nurutdinova, Dmitrieva & Amirova, 2018).

We can give the following detailed definition of modern globalization processes: “Globalization is a multidimensional, objective process of the global peoples' community formation on the scale of the mankind in unity with the natural sphere of the planet Earth, replacing local, isolated forms and norms of people's life with universal, uniformity, interaction and interdependence of various aspects of the lives of individual continents, countries, peoples within a single world, odes of personality, as well as openness and removal of barriers to the establishment of material, intellectual, spiritual, ethical, aesthetic and other forms of communication between people” (Barlybaev, 2003). Such an expanded definition of globalisation is determined by the large-scale, multilevel, multidirectional nature of this phenomenon, its complex structure and content. Indeed, the spheres and directions of globalization are diverse: one can speak about worldview globalization, the needs globalization, professional globalization, social, linguistic, information globalization, globalization of the transport system, economic, ecological, demographic, religious, educational globalization, globalization of culture, scientific and scientific-technical globalization, globalization of the way of life, political, criminal and sportive globalization (Nurutdinova & Dmitrieva, 2017a). Spheres and directions of globalisation appear in close unidirectional interweaving, as a single process, are organically interconnected and interacting attributes of the life of humanity as a global community in unity with the natural environment of the planet Earth. Separately, each of these factors, spheres and directions can be considered only theoretically because of their relative independence, significance and specificity of participation in the process of globalisation of human activity (Barlybaev, 2008).

Globalisation removes barriers that impede the capital movement, technology, intellectual achievement, information and skilled labour. Globalisation implies not only increased cooperation between nations but also a worldwide labour division. Globalisation is inextricably linked with the emergence of an educated society and is a characteristic feature of our social, economic and cultural space. Profound and original basis, the initial driving force of globalisation processes is the predisposition of a person to communicate with other people, which is the inner core of human nature, that man is a social being aimed at the formation of various kinds of human communities. Without communication with a similar person, a person would not and cannot be a person (Barlybaev, 2008).

Globalisation and internationalisation are two interrelated processes that lead to the transformation of society into new forms. Internationalisation is based on cross-communication

and exchange between divided nations. According to the definition adopted in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) studies, internationalisation at the national, sectoral and institutional levels is commonly understood as a process in which the goals, functions and organisation of the delivery of educational services acquire an international dimension. The notion of internationalisation in the field of higher education in international practice traditionally includes two aspects: “internal” internationalisation (local internationalisation) and “external” internationalisation, or education abroad, cross-border education, cross-border education (education overseas, across borders, cross-border education) (Internationalization of Education, 2009; Internationalization of Higher Education, 2004).

Unlike globalisation, internationalisation is not a new phenomenon. The idea of cross-cultural cooperation in art, science and education was born in the XVII century. At present, new forms of international cooperation have emerged. Global globalisation, integration within Europe and the transformation processes in Russia and other countries of Eastern Europe led to the rapid growth of contacts in all areas of our life at the intercultural level. Communication with representatives of other cultures has become a part of our daily life. Intercultural contacts took place at all times, but today they are more than ever global and massive (Nurutdinova & Dmitrieva, 2017b). Tourist trips, exchange of pupils and students for the purpose of more in-depth study of the language, culture, internships of scientists and international conferences, transnational concerns, joint ventures, exhibitions, tours, political discussions at the international level, Olympic games, various other sports competitions, personal contacts - this is far from an incomplete list of situations of intercultural communication, firmly included in our daily life.

Under the influence of globalisation processes, the number of models of social behaviour increases, and one of the new conditions for social mobility and successful adaptation in the social space is the mastery of foreign languages (Zelenina et al., 2006). With the development of international business contacts, the development of new foreign technologies and the intensification of professional activities in close contact with foreign specialists, and also in connection with the prospect of Russia's accession to the WTO, the need of individual regions of Russia for specialists with foreign languages has increased notably. The socially active population of the Far East is increasingly seeking to use the international labour market that has opened up to them, where the level of fluency in foreign languages influences the success (Blazhevich, 2010) significantly. All this – Russia's rapid entry into the world community, significant changes in politics, economics, culture, mixing and moving peoples and languages, changing relations between Russians and foreigners, entirely new goals of communication – leads to logical results: in Russia, – there is an unprecedented demand for the study of foreign languages.

The internationalisation of higher education creates new opportunities, increases the accessibility of higher education and its quality, and introduces innovative methods of work in higher education systems. Relying on the achievements of international cooperation, internationalisation, in turn, contributes to its strengthening. The internationalization of education pursues various goals, among which: diversification and the growth of financial revenues through the attraction of foreign students to paid education; expansion of curricula and training of their students in foreign partner universities; expansion of the regional network of the university for the practical use of its resources; improving the quality of education and research through the participation of students and teachers in the international process of knowledge sharing (Nurutdinova et al., 2017). The development of international interuniversity cooperation allows organising joint research projects, exchange programs for students and teachers, special programs for international students (Saginova, 2006).

The internationalisation of education includes the following forms of international cooperation (Internationalization of Higher Education, 2004):

- Individual (academic) mobility: mobility of students or faculty for educational purposes;

- The mobility of educational programs and institutional mobility; formation of new international standards of educational programs;
- Integration into the curricula of the international dimension and educational standards;
- Institutional partnership: the creation of strategic educational alliances.

The internationalisation of education is aimed at the convergence of national systems, finding and developing universal concepts and components in them, those common grounds that form the basis for the diversity of national cultures, promoting their mutual enrichment (Kuptsov, 1991).

As was shown above, the internationalisation of higher education today means student and teaching mobility, the reform of curricula, cooperation in research and development through networks and associations, open and distance learning without borders, the regional and foreign cooperation of educational institutions, the international division of labour and other activities (Tukaeva et al., 2018), where the precondition for successful international co-operation is the absence of a language barrier. Everyone understands that the first prerequisite for successful international cooperation is the provision of mutual understanding through teaching, on the one hand, and learning a common language, on the other. In this respect, Western European countries with their traditions of language education are in a more favourable situation than, for example, Russia, where decades of life behind the “Iron Curtain” did not mainly stimulate the study of foreign languages. However, at the end of the 1980s, when the borders were opened, the situation changed drastically.

## **Research Methods**

The sociocultural processes associated with the entry of the world community in the era of informatisation, the development of telecommunication technologies, the need for a person to quickly adapt to the conditions of a continually changing multicultural world increase interest in the subject “foreign language”. Throughout history, the study of languages was regarded as an actual element of the formation of a cultural person. In connection with global changes in the political and economic life of the society, a foreign language has become a means of intercultural communication.

Back in the XVIII century the French Philosopher F. Voltaire said that “knowing many languages means having many keys to one lock.” The great German Thinker I. Goethe, noting the interrelation of languages, said: “Who does not know foreign languages, he does not understand anything and in his native language.”

Valuable thoughts on the study of foreign languages are found in the statements of foreign and national educators and thinkers, who emphasise the role of language in the formation of the personality, its intellect, morality and spirituality. This is due to the most important and determining role of a foreign language in the development, first of all, of a person's thinking ability. Knowledge of foreign languages promotes penetration into the past of peoples, knowledge of their present, foreseeing the future; helps assess the masterpieces of world culture and expand the philological training of students (Okonishnikova, 2008).

## **Results**

The education system in Russia has undergone some significant changes in recent years. The refusal of the state monopoly in the field of education, the transition to paid training, and the changing way of public life led to the creation of many non-state educational institutions in various fields of education, which in turn caused an increase in demand for educational services and foreign languages (Nurutdinova et al., 2016b). Changes in the education system are reflected in some official documents, for example, such as:

The National Doctrine of Education in the Russian Federation (Russian Education & Society, 2001) defines the main directions for improving the legislation in the field of education and is the basis for the development of programs for the development of education. The doctrine notes that the education system is designed to ensure the continuity of education throughout the life of a person;

Federal Education Development Program (Review of the national educational policy, 2000). The program establishes specific directions and measures for the development of the education system by types of educational programs - general educational, professional, supplementary;

The program "Education Reform" (Egorshin & Nikandrova, 2004). This program is an integral part of the program "Main Directions of the Social and Economic Policy of the Government of the Russian Federation for a Long-Term Perspective." Section 1.3 focuses on improving the quality of education by its openness and informatisation, financing the informatisation of education and the introduction of modern teaching technologies, including the Internet. Section 1.10 provides suggestions for the development of additional and postgraduate professional education;

The concept of modernisation of Russian education for the period until 2010 (Official documents in education, 2002). The concept defines the priorities of the educational policy and the main directions, stages and measures for the modernisation of the education system.

A new approach to education suggests that education should no longer be limited solely to the school. On the contrary, it should include leisure, family, work, society, international relations, the environment. It requires that people become teachers and realise their intellectual, emotional and creative potential (Leclerc, 1991). For this type of education to become possible and not seem a utopia, new educational structures and a changed way of thinking are needed. In this case, the system of continuous language education should be designed in such a way that in a timely and flexible manner it meets the educational and professional needs of the individual. The most critical component of this system is, as already noted, its continuity, i.e., openness for the entry of any individual wishing to acquire the appropriate level of language education or to acquire a different specialisation, at any stage of his or her life activity (Paye, 1996).

Education XXIst century should distinguish the following features (Egorshin & Nikandrova, 2004):

- accessibility, provision of prerequisites and guarantees for quality education for all;
- diversity, the creation of conditions for quality education for everyone;
- continuity, the development of a system of promptly renewed education throughout life;
- fundamentality and depth of the foundations of primary, primary, general secondary and vocational education;
- the practical orientation of education;
- the adequacy of education, its relevance to the needs and tasks of developing the economy, culture, science and technology;
- the international nature of education.

To realise these ideas, it is essential to create conditions for improving the healthy entrepreneurial activity of educational institutions of all forms of ownership, to expand the market for paid educational, information and scientific and technical services provided by them (Egorshin & Nikandrova, 2004).

A new look at education is an objective necessity. New tasks involve changes in the requirements for the level of foreign language proficiency, the definition of new approaches to the

selection of content and organisation of the material, the use of adequate forms and types of control in different ways of studying it. In the era of globalisation, the socio-cultural context of the study of foreign languages in Russia has changed significantly (Nurutdinova & Bolotnikov, 2018). The educational and self-educational functions of foreign languages, their professional importance in school, in the university, in the labour market as a whole, significantly increased, which led to an increase in motivation in the study of the languages of international communication.

The education system is closely related to the existing socio-economic and political conditions. One of the main trends in the development of the world market for educational services is globalisation, which is the primary force that is changing the world today. The process of globalisation encompasses all national education systems. Higher education undergoes a severe transformation under the direct and indirect influence of global trends. Strengthening competition in different directions is an integral factor of globalisation and characterises the modern development of the world education market. Competition is growing between traditional state-owned universities and alternative higher education institutions, such as virtual, corporate educational associations, which are in the hands of private capital. The struggle for students between universities within the country and at the inter-country level is increasing. The globalisation of the market was made possible through the liberalisation of educational services markets (Aidrus & Filippov, 2008).

The world market for higher education is often called the tertiary market. As a rule, higher and postgraduate education is referred to tertiary level educational services. In many countries, tertiary education includes bachelor's, masters and doctoral studies. Another approach to the definition of tertiary education can be found in the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), according to which tertiary education includes secondary vocational education, higher education and postgraduate education (Aidrus & Filippov, 2008). The struggle of universities for leadership continues, so every year the university rating changes.

There are new trends in language education and significant development of some old (Vasilyeva & Nurutdinova, 2018): increasing the variability of teaching foreign languages, expanding multiculturalism, expanding the range of foreign languages, opportunities for individualization of the learning process of a foreign language, internationalization of teaching, increasing the number of universities using multimedia technologies learning a foreign language. The abovementioned trends have a positive impact on the development of language education and allow improving the quality of teaching a foreign language. To implement programs for additional vocational foreign-language education, universities with educational centres are required, where the best-qualified teachers are taught, an appropriate educational infrastructure is created to accommodate a large number of students, and there is a high level of educational services provided.

Educational programs in foreign languages are represented in the system of supplementary vocational education of almost any higher educational institution, as evidenced by the analysis carried out within the framework of this study (Official documents in education, 2002). The analysis was carried out by studying the sites of higher educational institutions in Russia and encompassed both central and peripheral universities. We periodically conduct this kind of cuts, because they help us to adequately build the activity of the Institute of Continuing Education in HEI "The University of Management TISBI." In the course of such a study, the following conclusions were made.

As a rule, educational programs in foreign languages are offered either in the continuing professional education or through the centres of foreign languages available in universities: the centre of American studies, the French centre, the centre for studying Canada, German educational and cultural centre. The names of the centres are different - they are imaginative, but as a rule, they have the same mission: popularisation of the culture of the country of the represented language, study of its economy, politics, culture, scientific problems, development of all-around

ties and cooperation with it. In the centres of this kind, meetings with native speakers are regularly held, thematic meetings prepared by students and teachers, a video club can work. The educational activity of the centre in most cases is connected with the preparation for international examinations in foreign languages, and the vast majority of language courses are realised through the system of additional education of the university.

The courses offered by universities are known for their effective teaching of foreign languages with the active use of a communicative methodology, which, in combination with conversational practice, helps listeners develop oral communication skills.

The most popular languages offered are English, Spanish, French, German, Italian, Finnish, Chinese. At the same time, central universities, for example, universities in Moscow or St. Petersburg, offer a more significant number of European languages (including Dutch, Swedish) than peripheral universities. Such languages as Chinese or Japanese are typical for educational programs of Far Eastern universities. Moreover, languages such as Arabic, Latin or Hebrew are rarely represented in the programs of additional education of universities.

The target audience is mostly adults or middle age. Programs of early language education are rarely found in the university. The same is true for educational programs for schoolchildren. Exceptions are school leavers who are potential university entrants and therefore have the opportunity to study in vocational training programs for universities. The target audience of HEIs is diverse: specialists, students, other categories of the adult population, schoolchildren are mostly residents. Seldom target audience is children of younger age. Higher educational institutions in their additional educational activities, as a rule, do not offer programs of early language education for preschool children.

The proposed educational programs provide for a multilevel system of education with the acquisition of both linguistic and regional knowledge. The traditional number of levels is five (initial, basic, fundamental, level of language improvement and level of language mastery). In practice, more often there are programs with fewer levels - two or three. Training programs, for example, consisting of eight levels, are rare.

In the case of a significant demand for educational services, groups are formed according to the results of testing. This condition can be difficult to observe with a small contingent of students, which, in turn, makes it difficult for the teacher to work and leaves a trace of dissatisfaction among the trainees.

The average number of listeners in a language group is 10-12 people. There is a tendency to reduce the number of listeners in the group. It is believed that this is one of the components of improving the quality of educational services and, of course, attractive for students, but in the case of foreign languages, it is unprofitable for the university.

In connection with the peculiarities of the trained contingent, HEIs offer classes in the system of supplementary vocational education at a convenient time for the listeners. There are a day and evening forms of training. However, classes in the evening are more popular than in the daytime.

The volume of educational programs (in hours) and duration of training (in weeks, months) varies considerably. Universities do not particularly welcome specific courses and courses less than 72 hours. Preference is given to longer-term programs, which on average are two or three months of training. Many programs are offered, in which the duration of training ranges from three months to three years, depending on the knowledge and objectives. Highly qualified professors with a high level of language pedagogical education are involved in teaching.

There is a tendency to attract native speakers to the learning process, which certainly increases the attractiveness of language courses and supports the motivation to learn the language.

The educational programs of the central universities (Moscow, St. Petersburg), naturally, differ from the educational programs of other Russian universities - there is more demand for foreign languages, the market for educational services is more diverse, there are more opportunities to attract native speakers. For example, for conducting master classes during a semester, teachers from leading universities of the world can be attracted; There is an opportunity to conduct language courses with the best teachers of the university, as well as individual education programs. However, the higher the cost of the offered services. In general, central universities have more prospects and opportunities for realising the idea of continuous foreign language education.

Many universities are preparing for the passing of international examinations in foreign languages: English, German, French, Spanish.

Some universities actively implement information and communication technologies (ICT) in the educational process and offer distance education programs, including in foreign languages. Classes are conducted from combined outlandish technologies, involving the conduct of networking lessons based on satellite television broadcasting technologies. The interactivity of listeners is provided through e-mail, teleconference, video conferencing. Increasing use is found in use in the educational process of electronic learning environments.

The idea of continuing education is so prevalent in recent times that many universities proclaim it as the basis for the activity of additional education, which is reflected in the name of the structures (the institution of continuous education, the centre for continuing education). In reality, the university does not have a continuous chain of educational services, including foreign languages. The most popular programs offered are called something like this (English example): “Conversational English”, “Business English”, “English for Beginners”, “English for Professional Communication”, “Translation in Professional Communication”, “Preparation for International Exam”.

## **Discussion**

Language globalisation proceeds from the premise that language is a means of human communication and results in the development of multilingualism (Barlybaev, 2008). Political, socio-economic and cultural changes in Russia in the 90's. Significantly expanded the functions of a foreign language. The inclusion of Russia in the world market, expansion of cooperation with foreign countries significantly increased the possibility of contacts for representatives of various social and age groups. There were real conditions for getting the education and work abroad, for promoting Russian goods and services to the world market, for exchanging students, schoolchildren, and specialists. As a result, the role of the foreign language in society has changed, and from the academic subject it has become a fundamental element of the modern education system, a means to achieve the professional realisation of the individual (Nurutdinova & Dmitrieva, 2017c).

One of the features of the Russian market for educational services is the growing competition of educational institutions for attracting potential students, which becomes a significant problem for the university. Marketers and education managers should attract not only new consumers (paid students and listeners) but also adapt their efforts to the actions of competitors, which requires the development of effective marketing strategies (Development of a marketing complex for a new company on the market of educational services, 2008). The main tasks of universities and scientific circles in the sphere of export promotion of educational services are to assess the prospective opportunities for exporting educational services, creating prerequisites for increasing education exports, based on (Knowledge of a foreign language is important in job placement, 2011):

– an adequate assessment of its export potential and prospects for its development through the development of investment business plans, taking into account the possibilities for diversifying sources;

- formation of competitive educational products;
- development of infrastructure that guarantees the possibility of providing quality educational services;
- participation in monitoring and in creating conditions that ensure an attractive social infrastructure for consumers;
- effective implementation of the activities of the program.

The most critical first step in strategic marketing is a clear understanding of the environment. The orientation of the activity to the consumer is expressed in the following well-known principle: “Produce what the consumer wants, and do not try to sell to him what you managed to produce” (Development of a marketing complex for a new company on the market of educational services, 2008).

For the successful functioning of the system of continuous language education, it is essential to collect data on the trade in educational services, in this case, foreign languages. It is advisable to study the available proposals, as knowing information helps to develop the right development strategy and stimulates to improve the quality of the services offered. Of course, to strive for a more detailed and complete collection of statistical information. Nevertheless, there is a problem of limited coverage of universities, scientific centres and other organisations engaged in providing educational services in foreign languages and statistics. In our work, we rely on the experience of individual universities in Russia and regularly study the market of Udmurtia, which allows us to track prices and the type of educational services offered and helps to identify new trends in the development of education (Nurutdinova & Dmitrieva, 2018). The primary source of information is the Internet sites of institutions and the advertisement of educational services of any kind (newspaper, magazine, media, radio, television). The variety of types and models of foreign language education complicates the task of collecting such data and analysing them, studying the dynamics of the development of education, and comparing the training systems of different higher education institutions or organisations in the sphere of additional education.

The role of linguistic diversity in society is reflected, for example, in the following official documents (Foreign language and modern society, 2008):

1. UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001 (Linguistic Diversity in UNESCO Regulations. Languages Endangered, UNESCO). The plan of action of this declaration calls on the Member States to take appropriate measures to:

- the preservation of the linguistic heritage of humankind and the promotion of self-expression, creativity and the dissemination of ideas in as many languages as possible;
- promoting linguistic diversity - while maintaining respect for the mother tongue - at all levels of education wherever possible, as well as learning several languages from an early age;
- expanding linguistic diversity in cyberspace, and promoting universal access across global networks to any public domain information.

2. Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003. The Convention recognises the vital role of language as the means of expression and transfer of the intangible cultural heritage. Everyday use and transmission from generation to generation of all forms of intangible heritage - from knowledge of the universe to customs and rituals, from performing arts to knowledge and skills associated with traditional crafts - depend on the language. In the field of oral traditions and forms of expression, language is not merely the bearer of the intangible heritage but forms its basis.

3. Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, 2005. The introductory part of the Convention affirms that linguistic diversity is a fundamental

element of cultural diversity. In the context of measures aimed at protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions that are proposed for participating countries, the Convention also recommends the adoption of provisions relating to the language used in connection with cultural activities, the exchange of goods and services.

The changes that have taken place in Russia over the past decades have transformed the country from a closed, oriented only to its forces and reserves, to a state open to the whole world. At all levels, the need for contacts with representatives of other countries has increased. In connection with the integration of Russia into the world economic and cultural space, with the expansion and qualitative change of international relations, the possession of foreign languages adequate to the historical moment becomes one of the essential competencies of modern man. Foreign language opens the way to free communication of people of different nationalities, the rapprochement of cultures, mutual understanding.

4. Following the “Concept of modernisation of Russian education for the period until 2010”, a new language policy of the state is formulated. The modern system of teaching a foreign language, according to this policy, is characterised by the fact that, firstly, the practical possession of a foreign language has become an urgent need of broad sections of society, and secondly, the general social context creates favourable conditions for the differentiation of teaching a foreign language. With the implementation of the new language policy, the creation of a flexible system of choice of languages and the conditions for their study, as well as a variational system of forms and means of teaching reflecting the current state of the theory and practice of teaching is connected with the implementation of the new language policy (On Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education, 1996).

## **Conclusions**

The modern dynamic world develops in such a way that it becomes more and more difficult for an educated person to get along without foreign languages. When developing programs for additional vocational education in foreign languages, this is especially important, since it helps to determine the target audience and consumer demand.

For the modern generation, continuous education is becoming ever more urgent, which has a long history on a global scale, but in Russia, it has not yet been widely disseminated, although it has been recently spoken about and written about more and more.

The market for educational services in foreign languages is exceptionally diverse. It is saturated, dynamic, in demand. Foreign languages teach everything, and foreign languages are taught everything. On the one hand, continuous education is a reflection of the objective needs of society, which has reached a certain level of economic and social development. The principle of continuity is considered as the coordination and continuity of knowledge at all stages of the educational process. On the other hand, continuous education involves upgrading the level of basic knowledge and exceptional skills necessary to function in the new economy. At the same time, continuous education is a doctrine of lifelong cultivation of a person, the development of his abilities and inclinations during all periods of his life (The concept of export of educational services of the Russian Federation for the period 2011-2020, 2011).

The most important principle of the modern educational system should be the communication to new generations of the understanding that education is an ongoing process that must accompany human development throughout his life.

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