DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION COMPETENCIES OF CIVIL SERVANTS

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Manuscript received: 06/11/2022

DOI: 10.52123/1994-2370-2022-943 UDC 351.07/.08 CICSTI 82.13.11

Abstract. The communicative practices of modern Kazakhstan are becoming an indicator of the openness of the state apparatus and a social challenge to the need to build constructive interaction in the field of public relations. In this vein, this study examines the development of communicative competencies of civil servants. Based on the analysis of statistical data, the results of a sociological survey among civil servants, as well as the analysis of educational programs and advanced training courses for civil servants of Kazakhstan, the processes of professionalization of the civil service are considered. The results of the research showed that the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan is focused on a dynamic and qualitative approach in the implementation of measures set out in the strategic documents of the state. The theoretical significance of this research lies in solving the tasks of training civil servants on the basis of involving them in joint activities based on mutual responsibility and cooperation within the framework of the development of communicative competencies. The results obtained can be used for promising areas of research and social practice related to the problems of training civil servants.

The article is written within the grant funding of the Science Committee of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (AP14872210).

Keywords: communicative competencies, civil servants, participatory approach, training programs. **JEL code:** H7.

Аңдатпа. Заманауи Қазақстанның коммуникативті тәжірибесі мемлекеттік аппарат ашықтығының көрсеткіші және қоғамдық қатынастар саласында конструктивті өзара әрекеттесуді құру қажеттілігіне бағытталған сын – қатерлер болып отыр. Аталғанға байланысты осы зерттеу жұмысы мемлекеттік қызметшілердің коммуникативті құзыреттерін дамыту мәселелерін қарастырады. Статистикалық мәліметтерді, мемлекеттік қызметшілер арасындағы әлеуметтанулық сауалнаманы және Қазақстанның мемлекеттік қызметшілерінің біліктілігін арттыру курстары мен бағдарламаларын талдау нәтижелері бойынша мемлекеттік қызметті кәсібилендіру процестері зерттелді. Зерттеу нәтижелері Қазақстан Республикасы Президентінің жанындағы Мемлекеттік басқару академиясының мемлекеттің стратегиялық құжаттарында белгіленген іс-шараларды жүзеге асыруда серпінді және сапалы тәсілдерге бағдарланғанын көрсетті. Бұл зерттеудің теориялық маңыздылығы мемлекеттік қызметшілерді коммуникациялық құзыреттіліктерді дамыту шеңберінде өзара жауапкершілік пен ынтымақтастыққа негізделген бірлескен қызметке тарту негізінде оқыту мәселелерін шешуде жатыр. Алынған нәтижелерді мемлекеттік қызметшілерді оқыту мәселелерімен байланысты ғылыми-зерттеу және әлеуметтік тәжірибенің перспективалық бағыттары үшін пайдалануға болады.

Мақала Қазақстан Республикасы Ғылым және жоғары білім министрлігінің Ғылым комитетінің гранттық қаржыландыруы (АР14872210) аясында жазылды.

Түйін сөздер: коммуникативті құзыреттер, мемлекеттік қызметшілер, партисипативті тәсіл, оқыту бағдарламалары.

JEL код: H7.

Аннотация. Коммуникативные практики современного Казахстана становятся индикатором открытости

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МЕМЛЕКЕТТІК БАСҚАРУ ЖӘНЕ МЕМЛЕКЕТТІК ҚЫЗМЕТ

халықаралық ғылыми-талдау журналы

государственного аппарата и социальным вызовом к необходимости построения конструктивного взаимодействия в сфере общественных отношений. В этом ключе, данное исследование рассматривает вопросы развития коммуникативных компетенций государственных служащих. На основе анализа статистических данных, результатов социологического опроса среди государственных служащих, а также анализа образовательных программ и курсов повышения квалификации государственных служащих Казахстана рассмотрены процессы профессионализации государственной службы. Результаты исследования показали ориентированность Академии государственного управления при Президенте Республики Казахстан на динамический и качественный подход в реализации мер, поставленных в стратегических документах государства. Теоретическая значимость данного исследования состоит в решении задач обучения государственных служащих на основе вовлечения их в совместную деятельность, основанной на взаимной ответственности и сотрудничестве в рамках развития коммуникативных компетенций. Полученные результаты могут быть использованы для перспективных направлений исследований и социальной практики, связанной с проблемами обучения государственных служащих.

Статья выполнена в рамках грантового финансирования Комитета науки Министерства науки и высшего образования РК (АР14872210).

Ключевые слова: коммуникативные компетенции, государственные служащие, партисипативный подход, программы обучения.

JEL код: H7.

Introduction

One of the priority problems around the world is the problem of the effectiveness of the work of civil servants, since it is related to the prospect of the effectiveness of the civil service. Public bodies need to conduct a detailed analysis of the level of professional competencies and take measures to ensure the effectiveness of service activities.

The activity of a civil servant is through implemented communication channels in the system «human – human», «human - machine - human», «human society». This condition imposes special requirements on the communicative abilities of civil servant's personality. а Communication competencies, which are complex in nature. require constant development of skills that meet the requirements of the social structure and culture national contexts of in communication. The systematic desire of a civil servant to develop communicative competencies is an important contribution to improving the efficiency of his office The activities. management and professional, development of including communicative, competencies are closely linked to the organizational reputation of the state apparatus and the possibility of prospects for a number of advantages, including the formation of a high-quality staff (Sarah Bankins & Jennifer Waterhouse, 2019; Edgar O. Bustos, 2021).

The issue of the development of communicative competencies provides for a systematic revision of its structure and characteristics sensitive to new social challenges. In the New Kazakhstan, the state apparatus is required to restructure the communication behavior of employees in a certain way in order to fully provide feedback to the population, carry out activities in a proactive and effective direction, hear and listen to the opinion of the population, jointly discuss urgent issues, alternative possible ways to solve them in the interests of citizens.

Specific measures to improve the quality of human resources and professionalization of the state apparatus, revision of the current system of training, retraining and advanced training of civil servants are provided for in the country's strategic documents: The concept of a «Hearing state», voiced by the President of Kazakhstan K.-Zh. K. Tokayev in the Message to the People of Kazakhstan dated September 2, 2019 «Constructive public dialogue is the basis of stability and prosperity of Kazakhstan» (The Message of the Head of State to the People of Kazakhstan dated September 2, 2019 "Constructive public dialogue is the basis of stability and prosperity of Kazakhstan), the Concept of development of the public administration until 2030 (Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated February 26, 2021 No. 522. On of the Concept of Public approval Administration Development in the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030).

Thus, the development of the communicative competencies of civil servants is an urgent task requiring solution. In this regard, the following research questions have been identified:

- to what extent is the need for training expressed and what knowledge do civil servants need?

- what factors influence the demand for communicative competencies of civil servants?

- to what extent are the programs for the development of communicative competencies sensitive to the requests of civil servants and to what extent are changes integrated into their activities?

Materials and methods

The research uses participatory research and approaches to the formation of communicative competencies, quantitative qualitative methods. In research and practice. participatory and traditional research allows to focus research on action, take into account the priorities of the research group, interpret the results from the point of view of usefulness for it and include the orientation of research also on institutional and professional interests (Jacques M. Chevalier, Daniel J. Buckles, 2019; Shuklina E., 2017). Assessment of factors and programs for the development of communicative competencies was carried out for their effectiveness and focus on the priorities of the target group. Research data was collected with the help of a sociological survey among civil servants participating in the advanced training programs of the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan (hereinafter referred to as the Academy). The sociological study had 46 participants, which is 95% of the confidence likelihood of the entire general population with a 5% margin of error.

The survey was carried out during training at seminars and courses for advanced training. The poll was completed by employees of various central, state, and local executive bodies.

30% of the respondents were at the executive level and 70% of the total respondents were at the management level of government employees. Participants in the study were, on average, 32 years old. Men made up 65% of the sample, while women made up 35%.

Results

Researchers note that the forms and types of professional communication in the civil service differ from similar communications in other professional spheres. In particular, several of them stand out, these are:

1. a form of interpersonal communication (implemented in several of its varieties: civil servant – civil servant; civil servant – client);

2. form of social communication (implemented in the form of «civil servant – society as a whole»);

3. form of interstate communication (implemented as «civil servant – foreign state»);

4. form of information interaction (implemented in the form of «civil servant – information: documentation, media, Internet sites, blogs, etc.»)

At the same time, the forms of professional communication correlate with two types of speech activity: oral and written (Bessonova Y. and others, 2022).

As can be seen, the means and content of professional communication represent different types of speech activity. The communicative competence of civil servants is a complex social-psychological phenomenon and is a serious problem for the development of human resources in public administration. The Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan (hereinafter referred to as the Academy) is a leading provider of training civil servants on effective communications with the public, civil sector, and business.

In order to measure the sensitivity of training programs to the needs of civil servants, the process of formation of communicative competencies of civil servants was considered in the study on the basis of a pluralistic methodology of a participatory approach, which provides for the organization of activities of civil servants' co-participation in the study of the problem and the formulation of basic requests and needs for the development of communicative competencies.

The complex and multilevel process of forming the communicative competencies of civil servants in the research was addressed based on a pluralistic methodology of a participatory approach, which provides for the organization of the activities of civil servants' co-participation in the study of the problem and the formulation of basic requests and needs for the development of communicative competencies.

The main results of the survey of executive staff among civil servants showed that the constant development of communicative competencies is а prerequisite the for successful implementation of the concept of a «Listening State».

So, to the question «in your opinion, how necessary is it to constantly improve the level of communicative competencies of a civil servant, including through training (trainings, seminars, courses, etc.)» - 95.7% of respondents answered that such training is important for improving the effectiveness of professional activity. To the question «what kind of competencies should civil develop effective servants for communication with the population», 54.3% of respondents answered that it is very important to have practical tools for working in conflict and crisis situations at present; 28.3% of respondents consider it necessary to have basic knowledge of interaction psychology, tools to influence the behavior of another person. 8.7% of respondents highlighted that it is important to possess tools to resist manipulation, also such competencies as public speaking, critical thinking, etc. were called as basic tools.

At the same time, to the question «please assess the level of your communicative competencies», only 69.5% of respondents answered that they have a sufficient level of communication training necessary in professional activity.

As can be seen from the research, 2/3 of civil servants assess their communicative competencies at a sufficient level. The special needs of a civil servant include a high need for training due to barriers in communicating with citizens. This class of competencies is interpreted by them as action competencies, the ability to communicate using practical tools. especially in conflict and crisis situations.

Discussion

Kazakh civil servants are expected to be able to fully implement their official tasks, with a focus on customer orientation, humancentricity. At the same time, employees' awareness of their communication barriers and the need to replenish knowledge confirms the need for an analysis of factors affecting the effectiveness of training. In this regard, in the context of the development of communicative competencies, it is important to identify means and ways to improve the communicative competence of civil servants *(Harmatiy.O, 2018).*

Among them, the following methods can be distinguished:

improvement of sampling techniques for professional training in skills development and professional development (Strategy "Kazakhstan-2050");

introduction of a competency-based approach to selection for public service and a shift in emphasis from the assessment of theoretical knowledge to the qualities of candidates necessary for effective work;

evaluation of applicants for initiative, communication, analyticity, self-discipline, ethics, quality orientation, consumer orientation, intolerance to corruption;

expanding the competence framework, evaluating leadership qualities and strategic thinking of candidates for leadership positions;

concentration of training programs at the Academy on filling the «gap» between the required and actual competencies of employees.

This approach made it possible to develop programs focused on the development of communicative competencies, since the principle of a participatory approach made it possible to ensure the co-research participation of civil servants and get closer to understanding their problems.

As a result, within the framework of the development of the communicative competencies of civil servants, the Academy has constructed an educational environment close to the real one, in which various communication channels are activated: positive communicative qualities are supported and developed; experience of managerial influence and psychological techniques are formed; the skills to conduct a negotiation process and interact with the public are formed (Shuklina E., 2017)

The analysis of communicative practice and learning experience has shown that it is necessary to pay attention to the following communicative competencies «Orientation to the consumer of services and his information».

An analysis of communicative practice and learning experience showed that it is necessary to pay attention to the following communicative competencies «Customer orientation and informing customers».

Each of these competencies is revealed in terms of describing effective and ineffective behavior.

Competence	description of competence	level of posts	behavioral indicators of effective behavior	behavioral indicators of ineffective behavior
Customer orientation and informing customers	constant monitoring of satisfaction with the quality of services, prompt resolution of emerging issues, taking measures established by law, the ability to bring information to the recipient of services in an accessible and understandable way.	the level of manifestation of competence (1 – 15 levels of posts)	 uses effective ways to inform the recipients of the service, brings up-to- date information to the consumer in an accessible and respectful form applies effective tools for the prompt provision of services analyzes the level of satisfaction with the quality of services makes suggestions to improve the quality of services 	 uses inefficient ways of informing service recipients and brings information to the consumer incomprehensibly or does it disparagingly has a superficial understanding of the tools for providing services ignores the problems and questions of the consumer shows a lack of initiative to improve the quality of services
Cooperation and interaction	the ability to build constructive relationships with colleagues, other government agencies and organizations to achieve the strategic goals of the government agency.	the level of demonstration of competence "b" (10 – 12 levels of positions)	 builds effective interaction with other government agencies and organizations within its competence jointly with other departments implements and achieves the plans of the state agency; uses collegial methods to develop unified approaches 	 avoids interaction with other government agencies and organizations; when implementing the plans of a state agency, considers only the contribution of its unit important; single-handedly decides which approach to use to achieve common goals
		the level of demonstration of competence "C" (7 – 9 levels of posts)	 establishes trusting relationships in the team; builds productive relationships with other departments; shares experience and knowledge with colleagues to work together. 	 creates a relationship of mutual distrust among employees has difficulty establishing relationships with other departments does not share experience and knowledge with colleagues.
		The level of manifestation of competence "D" (1-6 levels of posts)	 Easily finds a common language with others Exchanges information to complete tasks Interacts with colleagues and representatives of other government agencies. 	 Hardly finds a common language with others; Avoids discussing tasks with colleagues; Works alone.

Table 1 – Effective and ineffective behavior

Source: Unified Framework of Basic and Differentiating Competencies and dictionary of Basic and Differentiating Competencies for administrative civil servants of Corps "A" and "B" of the Republic of Kazakhstan (as of April 24, 2019)

An analysis of professional training programs, refresher courses and retraining shows that the training of the ability to communicate effectively is often included as the main goal of training along with other socio–psychological skills such as writing, critical thinking and problem solving.

In general, in 2020-2021, 27 547 civil servants were trained in these subjects at the Academy and its branches.

The content of these programs is primarily aimed at mastering by civil servants modern tools and techniques for building effective communications with the population, civil society, including in conditions of uncertainty, crisis situations, argumentation and persuasion skills, etc.

Considering the importance of the communicative development of competencies for a modern civil servant, since 2019, the curriculum of retraining courses for civil servants first appointed to a senior administrative public position of corps «B» has included such disciplines as «Public **«**Communication speaking» and Management», in the curriculum of retraining courses for civil servants who first entered the administrative public service of the corps «B» -«Effective communication skills» and «Public speaking».

In order to improve the professional and communication skills of heads of central and local executive bodies, as well as press secretaries of state bodies, in 2019 the Academy developed a standard program **«**Communication Management», which several modules. included including «Introduction to SMM» (work in social networks), «State PR in social networks networks: practical block», «Copywriting in public PR», «Crisis management: anti-crisis scenarios and plans», «Working with the media», etc. Under this program, more than 200 heads of central and local executive bodies and more than 200 press secretaries of state bodies, who communicate directly with the population, representatives of the civil sector, business, etc. in their daily activities have been trained at the Academy and its branches.

Within the framework of the program «Transformation of Local Self-government», more than 600 rural Akims were trained in effective communication skills with the population, the quality and effectiveness of which largely depends on the ability to conduct a dialogue with the population, interact with various social groups, take into account their opinions in a timely manner, and provide feedback on a systematic basis.

Starting from 2020, the Academy, together with Nazarbayev University, is implementing a special program «Head of a New Formation». As part of the program, 126 political civil servants, 49 employees of the A corps were trained in 2020-2021.

A feature of this program is the inclusion the module **«Crisis** of Communication», in which the main emphasis is on the disclosure and practical elaboration of such topics as: the role of communications in improving the reputation of the state and civil servants; selfpresentation and technologies of public speaking; persuasive speech; principles of effective interaction with the population; «Tylenol Rule» as a universal formula for responding to a crisis; «Black Swan» - the impact of the crisis on reputation, opinion leaders and the «Third Force»: practical tools for working with new media and social media in crisis, etc.

During the training, the trainers of the program develop individual gliders, thanks to which each participant has the opportunity to perform tasks in a practical format, and consolidate the knowledge gained.

Following the principle of involving civil servants in the process of improving the content of implemented programs to strengthen communicative competencies, the Academy constantly analyzes feedback questionnaires from participants, requests from government agencies, includina authorized state bodies, interviews with stakeholders, the results of post-monitoring of the training for the relevance of acquired knowledge and skills. So, in 2022, based on the results of such an analysis, the content of the disciplines of retraining courses and seminar building programs on communicative competencies was significantly strengthened by specific cases, in particular cases on communication in crisis and conflict situations.

This work continues, in terms of conducting relevant scientific research, attention is drawn to the recommendations developed based on the results of the research «Communication Strategies of government agencies in crisis and reforms» conducted by the Academy within the framework of the Astana Public Service Hub project to support the scientific school of public administration. In particular, the recommendation on the creation of a permanent dialogue and consulting platform on the basis of the Academy for the exchange of experience and conducting various studies in the development and implementation of communication strategies of state bodies deserves attention.

As part of the implementation of master's and doctoral degree programs, the Academy is working on the development of professional competencies. One of the advantages of the Academy's educational programs is «Trilingual Education: Kazakh, Russian, English. Advanced training of English and state languages aimed at developing critical thinking and communication skills».

The main goals of educational programs are to develop civil servants' competencies such as «Cooperation and interaction», which implies «the ability to build relationships with colleagues, other government agencies, organizations to achieve strategic goals and mastering the methods of formation and implementation of managerial and political decisions. The study of communication processes is necessary for work in the social and political spheres. Creating horizontal communications. Ability to resolve conflict situations».

Interested state bodies and experts are involved in the development of educational programs. The Academy takes into account the requests of students and comments/wishes of graduates.

Based on the results of joint decisionmaking by interested parties, the following disciplines were introduced in the educational programs:

«Professional communications and public speaking»

The purpose of this course is to develop students' communicative competencies and it includes such areas as: public presentation skills, development of strategies and technologies for holding press conferences, interviews, writing analytical and other documents, creating a personal brand, working in social networks, negotiating, conflict resolution, and etc.

Expected results of the course: the student will know and effectively use the strategies and tools of verbal and non-verbal

communication, know the tactics of negotiation, image creation, conflict resolution.

The course «Organizational behavior» includes personal behavior, interpersonal interaction in the management of an organization. As well as the structures and management systems of the organization, «change management», «teambuilding», leadership, ethical standards of behavior, negotiation and conflict resolution are considered. The optimal ways of implementing managerial functions, developing norms, regulations, rules, standards are analyzed. The course is aimed at building an organization as a designed for the system effective implementation of its intended purpose. The result of the training is expected to be the following: after completing the course, the graduate will have strategies, technologies, and tools of effective management in the organization necessary for the formation of professional, strategic and innovative state apparatus.

The course «Professional Kazakh language for public managers» is aimed at expanding students' knowledge of political and industry terminology, as well as developing critical thinking of students in terms of language proficiency, adapting students to the ability to use reading, listening, writing and speaking in the Kazakh language. It covers national and foreign policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, language policy, and competitiveness development policy, etc. The course offers students various exercises to improve their vocabulary, as well as complex grammatical structures by discussing a number of key issues. This course will help develop judgment skills, the ability to widely use information materials in the Kazakh language in everyday life, as well as analyze analytical tools of state programs and official documents, as well as increase the requirements for the quality of verbal culture through new Latin graphics, public speeches in the official environment and the development of business rhetoric in practice. Written works are focused on writing essays in the new alphabet.

Expected results: fluent in the Kazakh language at the B2 level: conduct conversations in their specialty, use common vocabulary, scientific terms, complex syntactic structures, write reports, comments, essays, read and understand texts and information on radio and television.

«Language competencies for managers (in the state language)».

The discipline forms master students' language skills of oral expression of opinions, argumentation of their point of view with concrete examples, drawing conclusions, written analytical and expert writing. Also, in the course of studying the discipline, written and oral language work is carried out to identify the main issues raised in video materials, reports of informational and analytical, public content, analysis of the views of the author and the audience. As well as in the course of studying the discipline, written and oral language work is carried out to identify the main issues raised in video materials, reports of informational and analytical, public content, analysis of the views of the author and the audience.

Expected results: students develop the following language skills: oral and written speech skills; norms of official business style; written preparation for public speaking through a plan-structure; mastery of public speech techniques.

The course **«Professional** communications and conflict management» is aimed at studying models of interaction, taking into account the coordination of the points of view of key subjects and objects of management, with the business community, the civil sector and the population; the formation of sustainable skills for the diagnosis of conflicts and the conflict development of management strategies to achieve the goals of the organization and the state.

Expected results: students will learn how to develop an organization model and a personal model of effective interaction with key actors and management objects; learn how to diagnose conflicts, identify destructive ones, apply effective conflict resolution technologies, develop conflict resolution strategies.

The **«Strategies of professional communications in English»** course forms students' skills in applying communication strategies (agreement, disagreement, verbal support of the speaker, putting forward opposing arguments, developing a common effective solution, etc.) in English. In the course of studying, written and oral work will be carried out to identify the main problematic issues raised in videos, reports of information-analytical, expert content, comparative language analyses of various views.

Expected results: formation of skills, language including interview techniques; skills in applying communication strategies; norms of official business style; written preparation for public speaking through a plan-structure. It also develops competencies such as stress tolerance, initiative, responsibility, integrity, cooperation and interaction, focus on consumer of services and informing consumers.

The course **«Academic Writing and Research Design**» is aimed at developing the skills of civil servants in writing letters, analytical documents and programs, writing academic and scientific texts, articles in English.

Expected results: improving the skills of working with documents, research materials, and scientific articles in English.

«Professional English for International Relations» is aimed at developing language competence in English in the field of international relations.

Expected results: mastering professional rhetoric in English in the field of international relations. Mastering language competence in English at the level of international communication in accordance with the requirements of the international TOEIC test (*Test of English for International Communication*).

The course «Negotiation process Technologies» is devoted to the study of the strategy, tactics and technologies of the negotiation process, the process of preparing and conducting multilateral negotiations in order to successfully implement foreign policy objectives.

Expected results: knowledge and in conducting diplomatic practical skills negotiations; master the competencies of cross-cultural communications and negotiation management, drafting develop international treaties: the competencies of tolerance and respect for diversity.

Thus, the Academy has implemented a holistic process of developing communicative competencies in various disciplines and activities, the common views of all subjects of the educational process and the dialogicity of communicative processes are integrated into the programs and their content.

Conclusion

The results of the research allow to conclude that civil servants at the level of self-reflection and assessment of the current social environment in which their activities are carried out indicate the need for constant systematic development and of communicative competencies. As the main problems, civil servants point out problems and barriers related to conflicts and the ability to understand the behavior of people and target groups. In addition, the research revealed another aspect of this issue related to the fact that civil servants need certain areas of scientific knowledge, including the psychology of behavior of different categories of the population, in particular urban and rural residents, by gender, age and ethnic characteristics. Since the latter impose certain difficulties on the understanding and transmission of information. Also, the use of a participatory approach in the study showed the possibility of building an effective learning and developing environment based on the coinclusion of employees for the development of training programs and motivation aimed at the development of communicative competencies. The research shows that the sensitivity of programs based on the inclusion of employees makes it possible to brina training and development of competencies closer to the natural

communication environment of civil servants' activities. The main directions and results of the research allow to formulate its prospects. This will require the development of special programs based on the methodology of social intelligence, the essence of which is its focus on effective social interaction, understanding one's behavior and the behavior of another person and setting proactive activities in accordance with the situation.

Based on the conducted research, we believe that the development of the communicative competencies of civil servants in this way will require further revision and the development of a new strategic approach.

Another aspect of the participatory approach made it possible to expand the understanding of the interests and features of adult education, including life and professional situations in which communicative processes have their own content and components of the implementation of communication attitudes. The data obtained indicate the need to explore new interests and ways to develop the communicative competencies of civil servants.

A third line of research is the influence of the level of communicative competencies of civil servants on reputation of organization. This issue is considered as problematic and requires the development of new approaches to managing the reputation of the state apparatus.

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МЕМЛЕКЕТТІК ҚЫЗМЕТШІЛЕРДІҢ КОММУНИКАЦИЯЛЫҚ ҚҰЗЫРЕТТЕРІН ДАМЫТУ

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