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**THE ESSENCE OF THE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF THE SPEECH THERAPIST ORIENTED ON REQUESTS OF RURAL SOCIETY**

The article considers various scientific views on competence issues and the concepts derived from it «professional competence», «pedagogical competence», «professional competence of the speech therapist».

It is indicated that providing timely logopedic qualified help to children with speech disorders regardless of their location is one of the main educational tasks, the task of which is primarily assigned to a speech therapist. This, in turn, requires from the higher (special) pedagogical education certain changes in their training, the formation of their knowledge, skills and practical skills that would make speech therapists able to successfully carry out professional activities in any conditions.

Given the contradictions that exist between the needs of members of rural society in obtaining speech therapy and the lack of mobility of speech therapy teachers in the ability to timely provide it the traditional system of the preparation of speech therapists by pedagogical educational institutions and the lack of scientific research of the state of the training of specialists of this qualification capable of successfully carrying out professional activities in the conditions of modern socioeconomic transformations in the countryside, taking into account the requirements that the society is now proposing to the future specialist, offered their own understanding of the professional competence of a speech therapist, oriented to the needs of rural society. The accent is laid on the fact that one way or another the modern professional activity of the speech therapist in rural areas should be based on knowledge peculiarities of the socio-cultural life of the rural society, the traditions of the Ukrainian rural areas, its training as a highly professional specialist, the ability to professional adaptation in the specified conditions, pedagogical interaction with a wide range of subjects of the correctional and educational process.