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TEXTBOOK TRANSFORMATION IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING FOR STUDENTS OF NON-LANGUAGE MAJORS IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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The article deals with the transformation of the functions of the modern foreign language textbook in the digital era, and focuses on the specific ways in which textbooks for students of non-language majors can serve as integral components of an open educational environment. On the basis of contemporary international and domestic pedagogical research, it has been concluded that such an instructional tool should be a comprehensive resource with a clear structure, having a hybrid format, i.e. combining printed and digital versions with interactive elements. The textbook for universities with non-language degree programmes must contain professional content and enable students to develop skills aligned with their future professional goals. Besides, it must provide effective methodological support for the teacher's professional activities, whose responsibility in the digital era is to strike a balance between traditional resources and a variety of interactive platforms.

Key words: digitalisation of education; a foreign language textbook; non-language majors; foreign language for specific purposes; professional communication; blended learning resources.

ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЯ РОЛІ ПІДРУЧНИКА У НАВЧАННІ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ СТУДЕНТІВ НЕМОВНИХ СПЕЦІАЛЬНОСТЕЙ В УМОВАХ ЦИФРОВІЗАЦІЇ ОСВІТИ

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У статті досліджено трансформаційні процеси, що визначають роль і функціональне

навантаження підручника з іноземної мови для студентів немовних спеціальностей в умовах глобальної цифровізації вищої освіти. Обґрунтовано тезу про те, що сучасна освітня парадигма зміщує акцент із підручника як статичного джерела інформації на підручник як навігаційний та інтерактивний інструмент навчання. Автори поділяють позицію щодо переваг традиційного друкованого видання, зокрема тактильного контакту, зменшення навантаження на зір і стабільності використання, водночас наголошуючи на доцільності залучення інноваційних можливостей електронних форматів, зокрема мультимедійності, гіпертекстуальності та забезпечення оперативного зворотного зв'язку. На основі аналізу сучасних міжнародних і вітчизняних педагогічних досліджень доведено, що сучасний підручник з іноземної мови має функціонувати як комплексний освітній ресурс із чіткою структурою та гібридним форматом, який поєднує друковану й цифрову версії з інтерактивними компонентами. Встановлено, що інтеграція автентичних матеріалів, інтерактивних платформ і мобільних додатків сприяє створенню ефекту занурення в реальний комунікативний контекст і забезпечує розвиток навичок, необхідних здобувачам вищої освіти для майбутньої професійної діяльності. Наголошено, що сучасне навчальне видання повинно також забезпечувати ефективну методичну підтримку викладача, професійна діяльність якого в цифрову епоху передбачає пошук оптимального балансу між традиційними засобами навчання та інтерактивними цифровими ресурсами. Зроблено висновок, що підручник для студентів немовних закладів вищої освіти має бути гібридним навчально-методичним комплексом, який поєднує теоретичний матеріал, практико-орієнтовані завдання та інструменти цифрового контролю й адаптується до індивідуальних потреб і професійних траєкторій здобувачів освіти.

Ключові слова: цифровізація освіти; підручник іноземної мови; немовні спеціальності; іноземна мова за професійним спрямуванням; професійна комунікація; гібридні засоби навчання.

Countries around the world and international organisations are increasingly using cutting-edge digital technologies, systems, and mobile applications powered by artificial intelligence to provide access to services, improve administrative efficiency, optimise communication with citizens, and facilitate rapid information exchange in a globalised society. Education, as one of the key social institutions, responds to changes in economic, cultural, technological and political life, as it is society itself that shapes the demand for the competences, values and knowledge that education is expected to provide. Consequently, the modern higher education system is undergoing a transformation driven by globalisation, digitalisation and shifting educational paradigms. The issue of the effectiveness of foreign language teaching materials, with the textbook traditionally occupying a central place, is becoming particularly relevant [10].

Over the last decade of development in Ukrainian pedagogical science, researchers have directly or indirectly examined various issues relating to textbook development, including: the structure of principles for selecting teaching material for textbook content [1]; systems for mastering teaching material and the didactic potential of tasks [3]; the influence of textbook content on pupils' educational, developmental and formative potential [5]; the methodological organisation of teaching materials and modern requirements for textbooks in light of new realities [2], etc.

Recent international research indicates that scholars' focus has also shifted from viewing foreign language textbooks as a means of achieving language proficiency and as a universal tool for teachers to examining the quality of such materials in the context of developing language skills and improving English proficiency in a multicultural and globalised world [10, p. 856]. Furthermore, research contributes to a scientific understanding

of textbook usage patterns and potentially provides valuable insights for the fields of foreign language teaching and teacher training [9, p. 924].

The advancement of digital technologies has provided students with access to a wide range of learning tools beyond traditional textbooks, such as online articles, educational videos, and interactive learning platforms. Nevertheless, textbooks remain a significant component of university English courses. They serve as fundamental tools that help create a coherent framework for students' language acquisition. Some academic studies address the transformation of the textbook in the context of the digitalisation of education; however, the issue of integrating the traditional textbook with digital resources and the online environment has not yet been sufficiently explored. The issue of textbook use in foreign language teaching at institutions of higher education with non-language majors remains particularly relevant, yet is only briefly addressed in the academic literature.

The purpose of the article is to analyse contemporary international and domestic pedagogical research to examine the transformation of the functions of the modern foreign language textbook in the digital era, and to focus on the specific ways in which textbooks for students of non-language majors can serve as integral components of an open educational environment.

In his analysis of school textbooks, V. Redko pointed out that viewing the field of foreign language education as a subsystem of the general education system made it possible to define the theory of the school textbook as a discipline developing at the intersection of pedagogy, psychology and other sciences fundamental to language teaching, and constitutes a set of specific patterns, ideas, propositions, principles, recommendations, etc. It has been demonstrated that this field is undergoing dynamic development and is multifacetedly dependent on the educational paradigms that dominate at various historical stages of society, which, in turn, shape it [4, p. 2]. In higher education, foreign language textbooks have traditionally been the main source of information and teaching material for students. They consist of structured content, basic grammatical rules, vocabulary lists, reading texts and exercises designed to improve language skills. This structure facilitated a systematic approach to language learning, guiding students from basic concepts to more complex ideas.

The inevitability of the ongoing renewal of educational content is prompting educational science to focus on modernising such time-tested, indispensable teaching tools as the textbook-based approach, the clear definition of the core body of knowledge required for the development of cross-curricular skills and key competences, the integration of knowledge into current socio-cultural contexts, practising various forms of knowledge presentation, a focus on the application of higher-order thinking skills, the use of research functions to ensure student autonomy in the educational process, the utilisation of the potential of digital technologies and AI, etc. [2, p. 73]. In other words, in a digital educational environment, the functions of textbooks are undergoing a significant transformation, as they cease to be mere sources of educational information and become integrative components that facilitate interaction between traditional and digital learning resources.

Firstly, the structure of such educational publications is becoming less static and more open, moving toward an open learning system. International research indicates that a structured approach enables students to develop their language skills step by step. The textbooks used in English language courses can help improve language skills thanks to their structure. This is mainly because they combine explanations with exercises that directly

reinforce the material covered, allowing students to apply their knowledge in practice. Furthermore, they offer a variety of tasks suited to different learning styles, which makes it easier for all students to understand the content [8, p. 817].

When teaching students in non-language degree programmes, it is important that the textbook serves as a tool that links language to a professional context. The authors' experience teaching a foreign language at university across various non-language faculties leads them to conclude that students are more motivated to learn a foreign language when the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) approach is implemented. Essentially, this involves tailoring the textbook's content to students' future professional activities, i.e., the acquisition of specialised terminology, models of professional communication, and the exploration of contexts related to the field of study.

Secondly, the traditional linear presentation of material is gradually being supplemented by digital components that ensure interactivity, autonomous learning and access to authentic resources. The use of real professional materials, which ensures a link to future activities, solves the problem of detachment from real life: instead of fictional dialogues, students analyse real specifications or software interfaces. For example, in the context of studying Academic Foreign Language, students can work with authentic examples of email correspondence, CVs and presentations from international companies, analysing professional vocabulary, linguistic clichés and the peculiarities of intercultural communication. Such tasks help develop practical foreign language skills in situations that closely resemble future professional activities.

Furthermore, a textbook must be adapted to the teaching process, including the use of numerous supplementary materials, as one of the main requirements, which is capable of supporting the entire teaching process where necessary [6, pp. 165–166]. Combining printed and electronic versions allows students to maintain a tactile connection with the text, whilst providing access to cloud storage.

The use of interactive materials allows for different learning styles, as students can choose how they wish to engage with the material, and also helps engage learners for whom, at the current stage of educational development, traditional teaching methods seem less interesting. This flexibility makes learning more personalised, or conversely, encourages collaborative learning among students. On the other hand, digital resources that illustrate authentic language use can promote active student engagement. Contemporary platforms, including social media, facilitate language acquisition in ways that traditional textbooks do not. For instance, Instagram enables learners to acquire new vocabulary or phrases by following educational accounts. Such interactive formats enhance engagement and enjoyment compared to the static nature of textbook-based learning [7, p. 2]. For students enrolled in non-language degree programmes, integrating digital resources with textbooks supports preparation for the practical application of language skills. As proficiency with digital tools is essential in many professions, familiarity with such resources during language study provides a competitive advantage. For example, Academic Foreign Language courses require students to navigate platforms such as Europass, Grafiati, Translit, and CV-Maker, thereby developing skills relevant to their future professional environments.

Textbooks are no longer used as standalone resources; they are increasingly integrated with digital platforms that provide exercises, assessments, and multimedia content. This integration enriches the learning experience by allowing students to interact with materials at

multiple levels and to access diverse content formats, thereby deepening their understanding. The addition of QR codes, hyperlinks to audio and video materials, and online platforms transforms passive reading into active engagement, such as watching videos or listening to audio during lessons.

I. Xodabande and M. Hashemi found in their research that digital textbooks with interactive features help students build vocabulary and improve their academic performance. Well-designed textbooks not only improve learning but also keep students engaged [11, p. 1587]. Adding interactive exercises, assessments, and digital resources turns textbooks into tools that encourage active participation and language learning. This new role is important for making English-language courses more effective and interesting. Clear instructions and structured tasks in textbooks support different learning styles and help students make progress on their own, which matters especially in non-language degree programs where students have different levels of English and are primarily focused on earning a professional qualification.

With the growing prevalence of educational technologies such as mobile applications and online language exchange platforms, students' expectations of learning resources are evolving. Learners increasingly seek materials that provide instant feedback, practical examples, and opportunities to apply skills in authentic contexts. Traditional textbooks often fail to meet these expectations, as they typically lack interactivity and real-time engagement. Integrating interactivity into a modern textbook presents certain challenges, as not all students may have equal access to digital tools; conversely, some may not be able to afford to purchase a textbook (usually a student book and workbook if mention about foreign language textbooks published abroad), thereby missing out on the benefits of working with both traditional printed learning materials and digital platforms. This inequality may affect overall engagement and learning outcomes.

In her academic article, N. Bondarenko identifies certain advantages of the textbook-based approach, namely the convenience of its format and organisation; its systematic nature, taking into account a gradual increase in difficulty; the tactile experience of holding the book; the minimisation of harmful effects on eyesight; the processing of educational information to consolidate and generalise knowledge in a style and at a pace suited to the individual student, at any convenient time over a long period, the lack of need for a power supply or constant updates, etc. [2, p. 79]. The authors of this article share the scientific positions outlined above but believe that, at the current stage of educational development, a foreign language textbook can no longer serve as a completely autonomous learning tool. Firstly, the educational process is becoming increasingly integrated with digital technologies, making the isolated use of printed resources alone impossible. Secondly, it is difficult to find a single textbook that matches the goals, teaching methods, and professional focus of a specific course, especially when teaching foreign languages to students at universities that do not specialize in languages.

Ultimately, the defining characteristic of textbooks is their potential to provide effective methodological support for teachers' professional practice. This concept is defined as a set of content-related, procedural, formal, and functional teaching materials, whose primary aim is to facilitate the rational organisation of the teaching process, ensuring the successful development of students' foreign-language communicative and intercultural competence in line with the requirements of current curricula. It has been demonstrated that the subject's specific characteristics largely determine the selection of methodological

categories for textbook content, the level of development of didactics, methodology, psychology, linguistics and the theory of speech activity, as well as the educational goals set by society for secondary school leavers at a particular stage of the state's development [4, p. 32]. The studies often reveal two significant implications: the central role of textbooks in classroom instruction and the strong alignment between teachers' pedagogical practices and textbook content, which underscores the critical importance of carefully designed coursebooks [9, p. 924]. Therefore, to maximise the effectiveness of teaching, lecturers must adopt a strategic approach to selecting and using textbooks. It is important to choose textbooks that not only meet the course objectives but also engage students with relevant content. Teachers should take into account students' prior knowledge, interests and level of preparation when selecting textbooks to ensure their engagement.

Furthermore, combining digital tools with traditional textbooks can help create a more interactive learning process. Teachers can design lesson plans that combine printed and online textbooks and resources, thereby creating a blended learning environment that engages students. They are responsible for striking the right balance between traditional textbooks and the variety of digital resources, ensuring students receive a well-rounded language-learning education. Overall, in the digital age, a textbook does not replace the teacher; rather, it serves as a framework for interactive learning. The teacher uses the textbook to organise role-plays, discussions, and project work, drawing on ready-made digital resources developed by cutting-edge research in teaching methodology.

Thus, the textbook remains at the heart of the foreign language teaching process, fulfilling informational, educational, developmental and motivational functions, whilst offering authentic materials that enhance interest in learning. Such instructional materials are the primary teaching tools that structure the educational process, systematise knowledge, and implement the curriculum, thereby facilitating effective methodological support for the teacher's professional activities. Digitalisation does not replace the textbook, but changes its format, transforming its role from a source of knowledge into a navigational tool. A textbook for students of non-language majors should be a hybrid, comprehensive resource that combines theory, practice and digital assessment in its structure, multimedia and interactivity to create an immersive experience, with content that can be adapted to the level, needs and goals of students with varying levels of knowledge, as well as developing students' ability to communicate in a professional context using a foreign language. Going forward, these changes require a more in-depth analysis of the best ways to support language learning in a changing context.

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Use of artificial intelligence tools. Standard spell-checking and grammar-checking tools were used.

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