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# Teaching resources in professionally oriented foreign language learning

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**Abstract.** This problem is important because it is necessary to improve the methodical and didactic perspective of specialists’ professional language learning process at an organization. The purpose of the article is to consider the role of a study aid as one of the methodical and didactic tools in the system of skills development. Research methods of abstract analysis, methodical and didactic sampling, modeling, forecasting were used. Significant criteria for a study aid structure have been identified to develop the personnel’s dominant foreign language communicative skills at an organization. The object of the research is study guide materials providing the process of professionally oriented language learning. The subject of the research is study aids forming the professional foreign language competence of economists and technical specialists (on the material of the German language). The study has revealed that we should abandon the idea of existence of universal, effective methods of teaching a foreign language and attempts to develop an “ideal” study aid solving all methodical and didactic problems. This applies not only to educational materials on teaching German as a foreign language, developed in Russia, but to original ones published in Germany.

## 1. Introduction

Professional competence of a specialist is a complex of general scientific and special knowledge. In this system an important role belongs to a foreign language and a professional and business component of foreign language communication, which forms skills for professional intercultural communication in a foreign language.

The right choice of methodical and didactic tools system is one of the significant factors influencing the process and result of professionally oriented foreign language teaching. Didactic tools cover all elements of the learning environment consciously used for better organization of the educational process, and, consequently, they increase the effectiveness of learning. The most important of them include textbooks, study aids, study guides.

Efficient educational materials development and use form conditions for successful implementation of the above approach. Availability of numerous foreign language textbooks developed in Russia and abroad in the system of postgraduate education sets the strategic task of choosing proper study guides to organize educational process in the framework of development programs. In this connection it is necessary to take into account characteristics of an educational institution, age and individual charac-



teristics of students, methodical training specificity, the target audience national and cultural mentality.

On the one hand, the textbook is a foundation for language information and practice obtained by students in the classroom; on the other hand, it is an auxiliary means of teaching. In any case, none of the methods of foreign language teaching used nowadays can be applied without the extensive use of textbooks (study aids). Thus, the study of how textbooks should be chosen, organized, used and adapted is an important part of the teacher's professional skills.

## 2. Methodology

The question of textbooks role in educational process is actively discussed in modern studies. According to G. Neuer, the textbook is considered the main tool of foreign language teaching. It occupies a leading position in the modern methodology of teaching foreign languages [1]. I.L. Bim classifies study guides (textbooks) in the system of modern education as an information model, which is determined by goals and objectives, reflects theory, methodology and content of education [2]. The role of a textbook in the material support of students' classroom, extracurricular and independent work and increasing interest in learning a foreign language is discussed in the paper of S.Yu. Tyurina [3]. V.I. Blinov defines a textbook as a tool for university teachers to create their own methodological system [4]. Criteria for a teacher's creative potential development with the help of a textbook are set out in H. Acosta and D. Cajas's work [5]. P. Farrokh explores prospects of study guides use in terms of their ability to guarantee students' autonomy in foreign languages learning [6]. S.S. Bykova draws researchers' attention to the need to contrast the textbooks compliance with a communicative approach to foreign language teaching requirements [7]. L. Li emphasizes textbook value in integration of thinking skills when learning a foreign language [8]. N. Košuta and S.V. Ivanović review textbooks in the context of European language portfolio learning styles [9]. H.C. Liao and Y.U.H. Chen identify factors contributing to professionally oriented foreign language learning [10]. K. Umeda highlights significance of teaching materials development using multimedia [11]. Y. Tobe defines the role of audiovisual accompanying material for foreign language textbooks [12]. Y.P. Heinrich indicates the importance of the problem of general language policy in the textbook [13]. N. Enriquez pays special attention to supplementary electronic educational materials in textbooks [14]. T.L. Ballman emphasizes the role of the textbook subject content specified by context [15]. J. Jr. and J.C. Bookout discuss the idea of creating intensive foreign language courses in order to increase learning process efficiency [16].

Development of problems of professional communication teaching, particular issues of organizing textual material in a textbook, the optimal algorithm for teaching various types of reading, listening comprehension, a system of exercises, and rationalizing formation of terminological vocabulary are considered by the authors according to theories proposed by E.I. Passov [17, 20] and E.I. Kuznetsova [18, 20]. I.A. Zymnya's works help to take into account the psychological aspects of study guides, the need to develop motivation using a textbook [19].

Thus, in the present work, it is advisable to consider study aids for professionally oriented foreign language teaching from the standpoint of participants in educational process. On the one hand, this is the position of the teacher, expressed, according to Bimmel Peter and Rampillon Ute [21], in accordance with pedagogical activity to the goals of teaching the specified subject. In addition, A.A. Verbitsky and N.A. Bakshaeva [22] indicate the need to take into account students' psychological characteristics. On the other hand, A.N. Leontiev [23] emphasizes that from the position of students, it is important to establish the degree of their involvement in learning process. The authors' point of view on the question under consideration is reflected in N.A. Frolova's work [24] on motivation increasing factors and I.V. Aleschanova's work [25] on ways of communicative competence formation.

### 2.1. Materials and methods

The study was conducted at the educational Linguistic Center at Kamyshin Technological Institute (branch) of Volgograd State Technical University. Theoretical analysis of psychological, pedagogical

and methodological literature on the question under consideration, the study and synthesis of teaching experience of the Department of Foreign Languages and Humanities, diagnostic methods (observation, testing, survey), analysis of educational outcomes of participants at the Linguistic Center, statistical methods of the study results processing were used to achieve the stated goals and objectives.

Methodological basis of the study is classical didactic requirements for a foreign language textbook. In this regard, a foreign language textbook should pursue the following common goals: introduce the lifestyle, culture, including professional one of the country where the learned language is spoken; contribute to communication skills development with native speakers; promote preparation for a foreign language use in professional activities.

Study guides of leading Russian and European publishers were sampled and subjected to analytical, structural and informative analysis to find out an optimal textbook for a professionally oriented foreign language course.

Educational and methodological materials aimed at ensuring the process of postgraduate professionally oriented language learning, forming professional foreign language competence of economic and technical specialists were analyzed. A survey among foreign language teachers at higher education establishments was conducted to identify subjective perception of study guides qualitative component (30 respondents).

### 3. Results and Discussion

A survey among foreign language teachers of technical universities allowed finding out a number of criteria for subjective perception of the qualitative component of the textbooks used for teaching a foreign language (German). Thirty teachers were interviewed. The outcomes of the survey are presented in tables 1-5 (table 1, table 2, table 3, table 4 and table 5).

**Table 1.** Are you satisfied with the textbook used for teaching a foreign language?

Yes, it corresponds to the Federal State Educational Standards and does not require additional materials.	33% (10 people)
Yes, but some additions are required.	50% (15 people)
No, I use it in the educational process, because it is listed as a textbook recommended by the Ministry of Education.	17% (5 people)

**Table 2.** Did you have to make adjustments to the structure of the textbook, depending on conditions of a specific target audience?

No, it is not necessary, although sometimes you have to skip some sections of topics. The textbook material is easily adaptable to any target audience.	30% (9 people)
Yes, but some additions are required.	20% (6 people)
No, I work according to a given structure recommended by the ministry.	50% (15 people)

**Table 3.** What supplementary materials should be included in your basic foreign language textbook, in your opinion?

There is no need to include supplementary materials	27% (8 people)
More exercises to learn vocabulary and grammar	13% (4 people)
Authentic audio and video materials	60% (18 people)

**Table 4.** Do your students experience dissatisfaction with their basic textbook?

Yes, very often	24% (7 people)
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Sometimes, but only when they cannot do their tasks well	26% (8 people)
No, on the whole, they are satisfied with the textbook	50% (15 people)
<b>Table 5. Do you think that a textbook solving all existing problems can be created in future?</b>	
Yes	30% (9 people)
No	70% (21 people)

According to the survey results, the majority of teachers adjust the available educational materials, adapt them taking into account the target audience needs. Many teachers have to supplement textbook materials with up-to-date additional information, especially authentic audio and video materials. But despite this, almost all teachers believe that textbooks are a key component in most foreign language syllabi.

It was experimentally proved that all material components of the reviewed textbooks content can have a methodological significance only if they are related to the actions that should be based on them.

Exercises become the main direct material means of organizing the teacher and students' activities, determining the quality and value of a textbook, study aid or study guide [32].

In this article an exercise is interpreted as a small scenario of a communication act, in which the program of actions of the speaker and listener, as well as the reader, is set. In all the reviewed study guides, three main groups of exercises were found: exercises and tasks preparing oral communication; exercises and tasks building and structuring the communication process; exercises and tasks simulating communication.

All the exercises, in turn, are divided into two large groups: exercises for skills formation and exercises for speech skills development. These are respectively simulating communicative exercises and actual communicative ones. Each type is adequate to the purpose served. This means that the quality of the exercises in each category is correlated with the objectives defined in the study aids.

In other words, the system of exercises in all textbooks is a combination of the necessary types and varieties of exercises. Sequencing of these exercises performance and their quantity is aimed at teaching patterns in formation of communicative skills. Depending on the goals of doing the exercises, the following hierarchical sequence has been built.

The study of the exercises has shown that professional vocabulary development forms the centerpiece of knowledge of word selection rules and their compatibility patterns in various contexts in the process of specialists' professional communicative competence development. The observation of special terminology acquisition was carried out on the basis of the most frequent terms of the German syllabi, which were selected from branch terminological dictionaries and textbooks in German.

In many cases professional terminology teaching includes reading special texts that provides new vocabulary on the studied field of science. The need to optimize the process of learning terminological vocabulary becomes apparent in such a situation. From a methodological point of view, professional texts perception is complicated by their substantial aspect characteristics as they contain significant percentage of unfamiliar or completely unknown special vocabulary to students. A way to solve this educational problem is suggested in the work. It is close interaction with further education students, discussion of the developed teaching materials with relevant disciplines teachers, rational organization of educational process according to the principle "from simple (study of general scientific, adapted texts) - to complex (more complex special authentic texts) ".

In methodological literature, vocabulary learning is divided into linguistic and methodological aspects [2]. Linguistic aspect covers formation of a vocabulary corpus for solving communicative tasks at a concrete educational stage. Constant repetition of the studied vocabulary and its maximum rotation is one of the key factors, which ensures vocabulary development. Hence professionally oriented vocabulary learning includes various types of exercises: 1) non-communicative exercises aimed at

conscious learning the specialized subjects vocabulary; 2) conditional communicative exercises; 3) real communicative exercises.

Methodological component of vocabulary learning includes the necessary explanations and instructions on use of dictionaries, the form of maintaining individual dictionaries and cards with new vocabulary, ways to systematize the vocabulary learned. This is the knowledge and skills that allow the student to work independently on the vocabulary. A large role in this is also played by independent extra-curricular foreign language learning in the form of fulfilling a semester assignment to study authentic professionally oriented texts and their special vocabulary.

Thus, foreign language teaching should be correlated with the specialists' profession features. Professional language needs make it necessary to acquire terminological vocabulary that may be the best applicable in specific situations of professional communication. Consequently, a systematic and integrated approach to the choice of teaching methods and means is reflected in all the considered study aids. It is to solve the problem of professional linguistic skills formation.

However, Russian and foreign educational materials have their own significant differences, determining their advantages and disadvantages.

Russian textbooks positive aspects include:

- availability of translations into Russian or analogues for German words and constructions. The need to associate foreign words and constructions with a world perception coded in their native language is deliberate for many students. Even if classes are given only in a foreign language, students will inevitably ask questions about the translation of unknown information into their native language or refer to auxiliary information sources. In this, a word translation in some unit of the study guide may not coincide with the one given in the dictionary;

- optimal set of translation exercises. There is the dominant idea of developing students' skill to speak a foreign language "immediately", without double translation. Nevertheless, a good system of translation exercises can eliminate interference errors and facilitate foreign language information decoding. In the first stages of foreign language learning, translation exercises, in our opinion, will help correctly link a foreign language system to a native language, automate the code switching system. Over time, translation exercises can be minimized or even temporarily excluded, and then used again at a later stage, when it is necessary to develop translation skills;

- grammatical and other explanations in the native language. Grammatical explanations in Russian help avoid the difficulties of perceiving grammatical rules in a foreign language;
- despite their attractive design and illustrations, foreign textbooks cause stress for students due to their "incomprehensibility". Russian textbooks, on the contrary, are perceived as a reference book, which facilitates search for the necessary information;

- cost factor. The cost of educational materials set published abroad is much more expensive, moreover they can be used for no more than one semester.

Russian textbooks have some disadvantages. The vision of the world, mentality, cultural contents in domestic textbooks are Russian. In this regard, there are a lot of cultural, lexical and grammatical errors in them, provided that textbooks are not verified by native speakers. Monologue and dialogic texts are unnatural to native speakers. There is confusion in the use of areal options. There is lack of audio materials or they are insufficient. In the process of learning, it is important that the "input" (what the students hear and read) will increase manifold what they produce.

A number of factors that have a significant impact on the textbooks development and finalization, for example, social order, basic goals and teaching methods, specific technologies and techniques, the dominant linguistic theories, etc., have been found out. All these factors are systematized into four main groups: socio-cultural factors; general pedagogical and general didactic factors; subject specific factors; subject learning factors. A separate group of authors and publishers can be identified as additional, but also significant one for the teaching aids aspects.

It was found that Russian study aids are characterized by the grammar-translational method of presenting material. It means they have been developed in the traditional method framework of foreign language learning, based on systematic study of grammar, phonetics, formation of reading and transla-

tion skills. The compilers emphasize that professional foreign language knowledge implies different types of communicative activity: speaking, listening comprehension, writing, reading and reading comprehension [33; 34]. Each of these types requires specific working methods. Therefore, from the point of view of different tasks, “traditional” study guides have their own strong and weak points.

The specificity of material presenting according to traditional method is to master a certain amount of all types of communicative activity. This implies a thorough integrated study of all language aspects: grammar, phonetics, vocabulary. In this connection teachers’ skills to work with study guides are determined by the ability to “link” all the presented aspects and components into a single, effectively working complex. Russian professionally oriented study guides require systematic learning for quite a long time (at least a year), although the timing may be different depending on the available tasks. If the course of professional communication lasts for a year and contains about sixty-four academic hours of practical learning, it hardly makes sense to take on all types of communicative activity. In this case, it is better to focus on one or two aspects, paying the least attention to the rest.

An insufficient level of text materials development for professional foreign language education is Russian textbooks significant shortcoming. This can be explained by the lack of a system of professionally oriented texts presentation, uninteresting text subjects; differences in the degree of text material understanding and comprehensibility; dominance of monologic speech forms in textbooks, tasks aimed at teaching clichéd speech, absence of creative tasks for modeling potentially possible situations of professional communication.

In modern conditions, reading of professional texts is not the main purpose of teaching foreign languages at a technical college. A foreign language is considered as a means of oral and written communication in the professional field, which predetermines development of fundamentally new textbooks for professional purposes.

Leading German publishers’ textbooks are based on principles of a communicative approach in foreign language learning, and, as the name implies, are aimed at developing communication skills. Special attention is paid to speaking and listening comprehension of all components of language learning. Study aids do not contain complex syntactic constructions or active vocabulary. However, this does not mean that communicative principle of construction is intended only for teaching easy small talk. This method is designed, first of all, to remove the fear of communication. All grammatical rules in the reviewed study guides are illustrated with examples taken from real oral and written contexts of various functional styles. The examples show how a particular language phenomenon is actualized in various contexts, how it is used by native speakers in appropriate communicative situations. In this, the contexts are chosen in such a way that, having studied several examples, the learners could themselves come to a conclusion about how and when this form is used. In the field of vocabulary, the main focus is on those word combinations that are used in real communication. The considered study guides have two types of structural organization: a) sequence of topics focuses directly on a phased, step-by-step course of study, the so-called “closed concept of the material presentation”; b) educational material has a flexible system of construction, the so-called “open concept of the material presentation” [1].

The first type includes Russian study aids. At first glance it takes a teacher a minimum of time to prepare for the lesson using them. But detailed study shows that their use in teaching causes difficulties in adapting to each specific educational situation. German study aides with their openness and non-strict sequence of educational material presentation allow the teacher to be more mobile, and what is more important, creative in their approach to the organization of practical learning.

An analysis of Russian and European educational literature has revealed that well-known methodologists and authors’ textbooks are, as a rule, of a general nature and are represented by general scientific themes, without taking into account the professional specifics of a particular training profile. The above textbooks can be used in educational process only as additional materials for solving particular problems: for example, teaching professionally oriented reading and translation.

The analysis of the above study aides allowed us to highlight the list of criteria, which will ensure educational process with optimal and rational study guides (table 6).

**Table 6.** List of criteria

clear structure	clear grammatical progression and interesting content related exercises
focus on the European criteria for assessing knowledge of a foreign language (Der gemeinsame Europäische Referenzrahmen)	The optimal set of exercises on pronunciation and phonetics
suitability of methodological development for a specific target group	four-skill training (speaking, listening, reading, writing)
clear sketch, readable font	impetus for a teacher to further develop and create their own pedagogical strategies and methods of work
proportionate and relevant illustrative material	a teacher's methodological and didactic support, including Online
Interesting topics, assignments and exercises	facilitating preparation of a low-cost lesson
various topics and exercises appropriate for different types of learners	CD and / or DVD availability
clear instructions for assignments	rational additional material, including online materials
systematic training of professionally oriented and specialized vocabulary	cost
extensive authentic material	

Educational materials development for teaching students foreign language communication should be based on the following principles: unity of educational and developing technologies; personal orientation in foreign language education; integration in mastering all types of communicative activity; focus on formation of communicative skills for understanding and generating foreign-language discourse; educational materials authenticity and novelty; use of various types of professionally oriented discourse; reflection, self-assessment and self-development; interdisciplinary links integration in the content components selection for foreign language professional discourse learning.

### Conclusion

The conducted study revealed that textbooks will continue to play an important role in foreign language teaching and be an effective auxiliary tool for both teachers and students despite the influence of new pedagogical technologies. Good textbooks are guides to curriculum and syllabus development for the discipline learnt. They are considered as one of the numerous means for a teacher to conduct an effective practical lesson. But the positive motivation formation in professionally oriented foreign language study largely depends on the teacher's personal contribution to lesson preparation, educational materials adaptation and modification, as well as the copyright educational material creation. Availability of high-quality educational materials creates a favorable pedagogical situation, marked by students' positive reactions and educational activities activation. Teaching students a foreign language is considered rather complex and multidimensional methodical problem. The results of the educational work under consideration are given as an illustrative means of learning process efficiency increasing, further development of educational and methodological support forms and methods.

Thus, a modern study aid (textbook) as the main means of students' foreign language teaching should reflect its competence content. All materials must meet the main learning objectives and allow acquiring a certain level of foreign language skills.

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