

ПЛЕНАРНІ ДОПОВІДІ

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THE USA IN THE UKRAINIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS - TOWARDS BALANCED IMAGES OF COUNTRIES

This article describes some possibilities of introducing a balanced image of the United States in the Secondary Schools English Language Textbooks in the situation when in the national curriculum (1) there is no systematic direct volume of content specifically devoted to the USA or any constant strategy which could require promoting the image of any other English speaking country as well.

The purpose of my research in this article is to describe some possibilities of introducing a balanced image of the United States in the Secondary Schools English Language Textbooks in the situation when in the national curriculum (1) there is no systematic direct volume of content specifically devoted to the USA or any constant strategy which could require promoting the image of any other English speaking country as well.

This aspect of creating an English Language textbook for any grade of a secondary school in Ukraine is quite an urgent theoretical as well as practical issue as it goes side by side with even more burning issue of designing a national textbook with a proper balance of the image of Ukraine and all the English speaking countries in it.

To answer some queries of this very much ignored issue one should review some theoretical data on image creation as well as on correlation of images of different countries in question and try to create a model of strategies for the versatile countries image textbook design.

In the literature on methods of teaching foreign languages the main ways of presenting the image of the country are discussed. N.F.Borysko presents 5 ways of providing the textbooks with different kinds of methods of creating images of the country elaborated initially by Ammer [2, 28]: They are:

1. Imitation of something typical: imitation of real life examples with the tendency to generalizing and creating typologies of the events presented;
2. Documentary (or fictional) material: provides statistics, graphics, objective informational texts;
3. Affirmative exclamatory material: presents something special and unique
4. Problem oriented material: depicts problems in the life of a country
5. Critical (or idealized) material: shows different view points for comparison and evaluation

This typology of image-of-the-country-presentation methods gives the possibility to look at the texts, tasks and totality of visual material of the textbook from the viewpoint of binary questions which contain qualitative features of the image of the country presentation: Does the material of the textbook reflect contemporary real life in its constant change as a dynamic process

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or as something static which is never changed? Is the material of the textbook supplied with different kinds of documents and real-life facts and therefore modern or is it outdated? Does the author have ambitions to expose learners to a complete set of materials about the country (to try to give knowledge of encyclopedic nature which cannot be the aim of a textbook) or does he/she provides the texts and tasks with enough of references for the learners to get the information from many sources other than a textbook and thus the content of the textbook and of learning consequently can be significantly expended at the expense of the pupils' individual work? Is the material oriented on uniqueness and unexpectedness or is it such that there is an attempt in it to classify common phenomena and problems for all the countries with some emphasis on specificity and peculiarities of texts, tasks and visuals? Is the image of the country positively idealized or realistically critical? Are the materials problem oriented or not? Do the materials which contain the image of the country represent one viewpoint on the topic discussed or the whole variety of opinions is provoked? Does the image of a country doubles new stereotypes or it helps understand information critically and break any existing stereotypes? Does the image of a country ignore the possibility of analyzing contrasts in cultures or is it based on a contrastive analysis of cultures and languages? Is the image of a country represented in one monotonous style of design or does it have a variety of materials – printed, photo and drawings etc? Is the method of presenting ideas in the textbook explicit or explicitly implicit (an explicit way of presenting the material is considered to be a direct way of imposing something and an implicit way requires special skills of decoding meaning and is often used in literary works)?

It should be noted that one of the opposing questions shows much more qualitative characteristics than the other and it must be chosen, as a rule, for developing better modern textbooks [2, 29,30].

This list of binary questions has an evaluative power and can be slotted into a table as an evaluation instrument. We have developed the following table for evaluating speech activities of an English language textbook as far as the images of countries is concerned. The activity which is going to be evaluated and the table as a method of evaluation are given below. They are followed by the interpretation of the results.

The activity from the textbook «OUR ENGLISH» [3, 12].

Here below I quote an activity from the recent textbook for the 10-graders of the secondary school which are supposed to study two more years and to graduate as 12-graders according to the Foreign language curriculum of the year 2005:

Ex. 2 A. Read about the history of Ukrainian and American money. Compare the process of formation of the two currencies (Ukrainian and American).



Ukrainian Hryvnia

In various historical periods the word «hryvnia» meant a copper coin of two and a half kopyyka denomination, later - three kopyykas, and at last, a silver coin of ten kopyyka denomination was called «hryvenyk» (as it is known this tradition had been maintained during the Soviet period).

Parallel with the name «hryvenyk», the name «zloty», borrowed from the Polish language was used. Later, a silver coin of fifteen kopyyka denomination was called so as well.

Proclaiming the establishment of the Ukrainian People's Republic on June 18, 1917, the Central Rada introduced new national currency. Initially the Ukrainian Karbovanets was chosen as such currency. Its value equaled 17,424 shares of pure gold (1 share = 0,044 g of gold). The

first banknote of the Ukrainian People's Republic of 100 Karbovanets denomination was issued by the Decree of the Central Rada on December 19, 1917.

Chronology of putting banknotes of the Ukrainian State into circulation was as follows: January 5, 1918 - the banknote of denomination 100 karbovanets (H.Narbut's design); April 6, 1918 - 25 and 50 karbovanets denomination banknotes nicknamed «lopatky»- shovels (O.Krasovskiy's design); October 1918 - the banknotes of 10, 100 and 500 Hryvnia denominations («Horpyinky», H.Narbut's design); October 1918 - the banknotes of 1000 and 2000 Hryvnia denominations (I.Mozolevskiy's design); August 1919 - 10 (nicknamed «raky»-crawfish) and 1000 karbovanets (I.Zolotov's design), 100 karbovanets (H.Narbut's design) and 250 karbovanets (nicknamed «kanareiky»-canaries, B.Romanovskiy's design); October 1919 - 25 karbovanets (A.Prykhodko's design).

The proclamation of Ukrainian independency opened way to introduction of the full-value national currency in our young state. Hryvnia might have become such currency according to traditions of both Kyiv Rus and the period of liberation wars of 1917-1920. As to the name of the change coin, the name of «soty» (one hundredth), «rezana» (name of an ancient monetary unit equal to a part of the ancient hryvnia) was suggested, but the preference was given to the customary «kopyyka». The first specimen of Ukrainian national currency was manufactured in Canada in 1992 (V.Lopata's design). However the Ukrainian Karbovanets was put into circulation in Ukraine in 1992 as the provisional currency. This very monetary unit became the victim of inflation, caused by the economic crises of the transitional period.

The Ukrainian President's Decree «On the Monetary Reform in Ukraine» was declared on August 25, 1996. Karbovanets deposits of households were converted into Hryvnia deposits according to the exchange rate of 100000 karbovanets against 1 Hryvnia without any restrictions and confiscations.

Both Hryvnias and karbovanets were used in cash circulation for 15 days: September 2-16, 1996, with a gradual withdrawal of the latter. The use of karbovanets for all kind of payments was stopped after September 1996 and Hryvnia became the only legal tender of payment within Ukraine.

From the moment of launching the reform cash payments from the banks vaults (incl. salaries, pensions, etc), as well as all non-cash settlements were executed only in the new domestic currency.



U.S. Dollar

Dollar is a monetary unit of the United States, Canada and many other countries. Dollars equal to 100 cents. The U. S. dollar was modeled after a Spanish coin called the peso.

The term dollar is derived from Joachimstal mine in Bohemia. By an act of congress in 1792, the dollar became the official currency unit in the U.S. but the sign \$ for the new coin was that of the old Spanish pieces of eight. This sign showed a scroll, with the words Plus Ultra, waving between the Pillars of Hercules, the gateway between the Mediterranean and Atlantic.

The earliest silver 90% dollars appeared in 1794 each weight 27 grams. The U.S stopped producing silver dollars for circulation in 1935.

There were two attempts to revive the dollar coin. The Dwight Eisenhower dollar was minted from 1971 to 1978. The smaller Susan Anthony dollar was minted in 1979 and 1980. But neither coin became popular. In 1862 many northerners lost interest in the Union. The government printed more money. New paper dollars were called «greenbacks».

B. Did you know all those facts about the currencies of mentioned countries? What's new for you?

C. In pairs make a list of the most important events on the way of the establishment of national currency in Ukraine and USA.

D. What do you know about national currencies of other countries? Choose a country, collect the necessary information about the currency the country and present it in the class.

E. Read about two people with different professions and the role that money plays in their lives. Discuss the questions.

1. What attitude do you think each of the men has to money? How do their lifestyles differ?

2. Do you think they give any money to charities?

3. Why do people save money?

4. What different ways are there of saving money?

5. How does money (or lack of it) affect your life?

This activity, which consists of 5 tasks, was evaluated against the criteria which were elaborated from the binary questions mentioned above. Our evaluation process has shown that the majority of the tasks have qualitative features of the textbook material, so that the learning processes of acquiring the images of Ukraine and USA are dynamic, urgent, require appendices and can be enriched from other sources, strive to generalization with some emphasis on something specific and particular, realistically critical, give a variety of viewpoints, allow to break stereotypes, provide comparison of native and foreign language and culture, varied in form and content and combine explicit and implicit statements, opinions and attitudes. These are the features of the tasks with texts and pictures which need to be present in modern teaching materials with balanced images of the countries involved.

A thorough examination of the national curriculum on foreign languages

(1) from the point of view of possible interpretation of goals, objectives, obligatory thematic and functional content as well as each grade requirements to the main four speech skills\activities can expose us to a huge variety of possibilities for promoting learning experience based on building up dynamic and realistic images of countries for the sake of negotiating educational values imposed by the syllabuses and textbooks on one hand and obligatory demands of personal and language development of each child of a secondary school in Ukraine on the other.

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