Textbook: Focus on Students' National Identity

How to shape professional identity through next-generation textbooks: from multilingualism to global citizenship

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Abstract

The main purpose of the presented study is to theoretically justify the necessity of having a new-generation multilingual coursebook, as well as the procedure of making it up and using it as the main tool of shaping students' professional identity in the sphere of higher education. For this reason, the paper investigates the theoretical underpinnings and possible practical outcomes of developing a coursebook (course package) that would shape students' multilingual professional identity along with their sense of global citizenship. Taking into account the complexity of the matter in question, the research focuses on each consecutive theoretical aspect (professional identity formation, multilingualism, global citizenship) and puts forward all the necessary evaluation features essential for further materials development. The results show that the development of a multilingual professional identity in the light of global citizenship requires the use of materials evaluation to set a scene for further materials production; the use of authentic materials to stimulate more cerebral functions and whole-brain processing; the use of conceptual linguistic engineering of professional identity as a holistic method of language materials segmentation and categorization; the use of methodological divergence of multilingual learning/teaching to help students form their professional identities through the enhancement of their cognitive, axiological, pragmatic and habitual functions; the use of proper materials adaptation to make them more appealing to potential students; simultaneous and balanced use of both electronic materials and 'live' coursebooks. The current research lays foundations for the following stage of actual development and design of a next-generation multilingual course package.

Keywords: multilingualism, global citizenship, materials development, methodological divergence.

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Introduction

Identity. This is the term you are most likely to stumble upon in virtually every paper you find in the field of Social Sciences and Humanities. It seems this term, as well as everything it represents, has been very much in vogue lately. Nevertheless, if asked to demystify the meaning of this ephemeral phenomenon, the majority of definitions would most probably hide behind some voluminous descriptions, which are usually so highly abstract in nature that at some point they lose touch with reality and, therefore become useless for practical purposes. This is exactly the reason why this paper is not going to delve into tedious details of theoretical analysis of identity; rather than that, our aim is to figure out how exactly and through which means this phenomenon is to be shaped.

The question of identity formation interests us as an indispensable feature of modern specialists capable of solving challenging tasks at hand in their respective professional and/or scientific fields. Bearing in mind that extensive professional training takes place mainly within the framework of higher education, our research focuses on shaping professional identity in this particular sociological surrounding.

Shaping Professional Identity in Higher Education: Defining the Issue

Higher Education has always been one of the cornerstones of modern society. Needless to say, globalization, economic progress, and huge developments in the sphere of science and technology converted it into an absolutely indispensable element of modern sociological realities. This information is backed up by a more substantial body of data stating an unprecedented increase regarding the share of the population with completed tertiary education within the period of 1970-2010 (Roser & Ortiz-Ospina, 2013). According to College Graduation Statistics (College Graduation Statistics, 2021), college graduation rates at public institutions in the USA have a current 15% increase since 2010.

Nevertheless, one would presume that Hegel's law of the transition from quantity to quality leaves much to be desired when it comes to the system of education in general, and higher education, in particular. With absolutely new modern realities and challenges on the radar, it becomes clear that a new type of professionals is needed to successfully cope with the issues of the 21st century. Therefore, one of the top priorities nowadays is to educate the coming generations in such a way that their professional and cognitive skills are on a par with the level of difficulties they are to face in the near future. In other words, it is essential to adequately shape their professional identities.

In the view of modern breakthroughs in cognitive- and neuroscience, we believe that "the holistic understanding of professional personality and identity regarding an individual as a member of a certain worldview would be impossible to form without accepting them as a specific language personality (i.e. personality with certain linguistic identity, 'homo communicans') having distinctive

communication behaviour and strategies in each particular professional sphere" (Bagiyan, 2020: 191). Therefore, when shaping a full-fledged professional identity, one should do it through the formation of students' linguistic identity, i.e. proper language acquisition inadvertently results in a better professional identity formation.

Multilingualism as a key to Global Citizenship: pros and cons of "Speaking in Tongues" in Higher Education

In accordance with current neurolinguistic and psychological findings on multilingual processing in the brain, multilingual language learning turns out to be extremely beneficial for the overall cognitive functioning of an individual since it leads to significant improvements in the following areas: higher level of controlled attention; higher inhibition linked to executive function; protection against the decline of executive control in aging; much better memory generalisation; strengthening of neural pathways which augments executive control skills necessary for non-verbal tasks (Christoffels et al., 2015; Quinteros Baumgart & Billick, 2018), to say nothing of numerous social and vocational advantages the above-mentioned aspects bring forward. At the same time, studies and research on second language learning do not yet demonstrate the developed cognitive improvements found in multilingual learners (Bialystok, 2011). In other words, multilingual learners potentially develop a much stronger and more flexible cognitive plasticity and, therefore, significantly increase their overall cerebral functions. Thus, the next logical step for the development and evolution of modern globalized society is to perform a shift from second language learning to bi- and multilingual learning.

Considering the amount of benefits multilingual education brings in terms of smaller switching costs, greater cognitive flexibility, and decreased global precedence effect, it stands to reason that this type of education should be the foundation of developing the cognitive strategies necessary for shaping next-generation professional identity. Since the vast majority of all the professional competencies is formed in the process of higher education training, the possible results of forming a multilingual professional identity can be extremely beneficial in the long run.

All the theoretical justification of the relevance of this scientific endeavor apart, at the end of the day the real question is how to shape this kind of identity through the means of language acquisition. In this case, the success of the mission depends on educational materials and their proper methodological development.

Purpose and objectives of the study

The main purpose of the presented study is to theoretically justify the necessity of having a new-generation multilingual textbook, as well as the procedure of making it up and using it as the main tool of shaping students' professional identity in the sphere of higher education. Thus, in order to achieve the mentioned purpose, the paper aims at accomplishing the following objectives:

1) establish the interconnectedness of all the terminology essential for the research in question;

2) put forward theoretical rationalization of how multilingual education leads to the simultaneous formation of students' professional identity and their sense of global citizenship;

3)   define some key methodological elements which could lay the foundation of a proper syllabus and further curriculum development to meet the demands of shaping students' professional identity in the sphere of higher education through multilingualism;

4)   propose certain elements of the coursebook (to be more exact - 'course package') which we see as fundamental for proper multilingual education and, consequently, professional identity formation.

Literature review

Even though there has been much debate going on about the relevance of the coursebook for proper language learning, we tend to consider this learning material a valuable commodity to be consumed, especially taking into account materials development in multilingual and multicultural societies where they cover and satisfy quite a range of criteria. "Some of them arise from such a society's need to teach the values it wants to foster. Some arise in the desire to make education a handmaiden of economic progress and social reconstruction"(Tickoo, 1995: 39). Our position in this question is very clear: since the lack of affective and cognitive engagement proves to be fatal for the possibility of deep processing and further enduring acquisition, we claim that a course package should be designed in a way that will make education a 'handmaiden' of constant cognitive enforcement, humanization, constructive criticality, and a progressive intellectual reconstruction of our society.

For this reason, we find it necessary to take into account some aspects of material development and evaluation which have been neglected by both academics and practitioners worldwide.

Professional Identity Formation

A huge amount of research materials on the essence of professional identity and theoretical scrutinies on how to form it (Brown et al., 2021; Isotalo, 2017; Trede et al., 2012) make it slightly difficult to focus on what the most important things are when dealing with this phenomenon. That is why, in order to develop a practically sustainable theory of forming professional identity via next-generation learning/teaching materials, the first logical step would be to define the initial system of coordinates.

We believe that shaping professional identity as an educational objective should become a reality, in which case global education is in need to support this objective via curricular change; along with that, the basic educational principles designed to teach professionalism must also be reexamined. Thus, curricular changes that work in favor of forming professional identity include the necessity to establish identity formation as a principal educational objective; cognitive base formation on a particular subject in a formal curriculum; students engagement in the developmental process of shaping their own identities; the existence of a welcoming community to facilitate the entry of future professionals; faculty development to promote mutual understanding of major educational objectives as well as the means chosen to achieve it; a need to assist students on their way to chart progress towards becoming true professionals. All these aspects acquire particular relevance in the sphere of

higher education (see Nixon, 1996).

Proceeding from the general outline presented above, the understand the process of professional identity formation as "an adaptive developmental process that happens simultaneously at two levels: (1) at the level of the individual, which involves the psychological development of the person and (2) at the collective level, which involves the socialization of the person into appropriate roles and forms of participation in the community's work" (Cruess et al., 2019: 642).

Global Citizenship

In its most basic definition, global citizenship is about "a sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity", which serves to emphasize social, economic, technological, political, and cultural interdependence and interconnectedness between the global, the national, and the local (Torres, 2017: 3). In this respect, global citizenship education is technically the education for sustainable development on a global scale.

We agree with Tasneem concluding that the essence of global citizenship education lies in "understanding the nature of global issues as well as the range of ways in which those with power and resources can be influenced to act in a globally responsible way" (Tasneem, 2005: 178). In this respect, the development of communication skills comes to the forefront and makes it especially relevant for the global citizenship curriculum to have a strong multilingual and multicultural underpinning.

Multilingualism: Theoretical Preliminaries and FLT Potential

Amid a vast array of literature dedicated to the investigation of multilingualism and its innumerable beneficial effects on present-day society, we find "Multilingualism: an Asset or Europe and a Shared Commitment" to be the most succinct and convincing: "The harmonious co-existence of many languages in Europe is a powerful symbol of the European Union's aspiration to be united in diversity, one of the cornerstones of the European project. Languages define personal identities but are also part of a shared inheritance. They can serve as a bridge to other people and open access to other countries and cultures. Promoting mutual understanding. A successful multilingualism policy can strengthen the life chances of citizens: it may increase their employability, facilitate access to services and rights and contribute to solidarity through enhanced intercultural dialogue and social cohesion. Approached in this spirit, linguistic diversity can become a precious asset, increasingly so in today's globalized world" (European Commission, 2008: 3).

Even though Russia does not form part of the European Union and there are certain beliefs in academia concerning the misuse of terms like 'multilingualism' and 'globalization' as strategically deployable shifters (Moore, 2015: 19-20), we do believe the mentioned above creates a fundamental understanding of what exactly modern society should look like in terms of its multicultural diversity and the universality of essential values.

Calafato and Wright also acknowledge the fact that the promotion of multiple-language learning has gained significant impetus and become a key goal of educational language policy in many

countries (Calafato, 2020: 603; Wright et al., 2015). What is even more important, not only does the development of multilingual citizens significantly enhances their intercultural and communicative competencies, but it also shows their improved metacognition, metalinguistic and pragmatic knowledge, as well as their heightened creativity and greater earning potential (Calafato, 2019; Hofer & Jessner, 2019). This statement has been proved by a significant amount of neurolinguistic investigations of bilingual and multilingual cerebral functioning (Andrews, 2019; Noort et al., 2014; Quinteros Baumgart & Billick, 2018).

Designing an Ideal Coursebook: Pros and Cons

The first thing that needs to be mentioned is that when saying 'coursebook', we primarily mean not a simple textbook full of texts and exercises - there is much more to it than meets the eye. Any coursebook, in our understanding, represents a central, but not exclusive, part of a course package with the whole range of additional educational components and resources: workbooks, teacher's guides video content, different PC and smartphone applications, photocopiable activities, web-based extra resources and other online components, and much more (Hughes, 2019).

It is also worth noting the idea of adapting the coursebook and making it more flexible and open to modifications in accordance with specific students' needs and interests. It is well established in modern SLA theory that the material in coursebooks is far from being carved in stone, and teachers are more than welcome to 'tweak' coursebooks the way they see fit to fulfill the main objectives of a lesson or a syllabus. That is exactly the reason why a coursebook package with nicely designed extra resources turns out to be extremely useful to enhance students' understanding and productive output through extra support and challenge (Dodgson, 2019; Willis & Willis, 2013).

Methodology

Since the current study represents a theoretical analysis of how multilingual education is capable of shaping and transforming professional identity and the sense of global citizenship in higher education students, the chosen methods involve discourse and content analysis of some of the most prominent scientific papers on the topic worldwide. Along with that, the paper conceptualizes and categorizes the salient elements of a 'next-generation' multilingual set of educational materials in order to establish a methodological and scientific basis for proper professional identity formation via students' exposure to multilingual and multicultural settings.

Since the process of professional identity formation, immersed in such a complex set of theoretical and practical variables to take into consideration, presupposes a new method of extracting necessary language material from authentic texts. For this reason, we propose our own method - conceptual linguistic engineering of professional identity, where each step of linguistic analysis and data segmentation is aimed at shaping various axiological and professional aspects of proper multicultural professional identity.

Results

We completely agree with Tomlinson that both development and evaluation criteria for all educational contexts should be established prior to the materials production, "and used to make decisions about the approach, procedures, and activities to be adopted as well as to monitor their development and subsequent use" (Tomlinson, 2012: 148). For this very reason, one of the main objectives of this paper is to put forward a theoretical basis for further multilingual coursebook development as well as to set forth essential criteria and requirements these materials should satisfy.

Materials evaluation

When dealing with the design and development of learning/teaching materials, one should bear in mind that, even though "evaluation is inevitably subjective", it is of utmost importance for each educational context to build up its own principled criteria, and these "evaluation criteria should be developed before materials are produced, and use to make decisions about the approach, procedures, and activities to be adopted as well as to monitor development and subsequent use" (Tomlinson, 2012: 148). For this reason, we are going to do a list of the most important requirements for a multilingual coursebook which should be taken into account before starting the process of materials development. In general terms, when deciding on the adequacy and suitability of materials, the main considerations should be generalisability, adaptability, usability, and flexibility (see Tomlinson, 2017).

Materials adaptation

Among the main reasons why the adaptation of learning materials is important is the concept of achieving optimal congruence between methodology, materials, study objectives, the target language, and - most importantly - learners' and teachers' personalities and the teaching style of the latter. In order for this compatibility to be achieved, materials adaptation needs to be individualized, localized, personalized, modernized, and axiologically- and pragmatically-charged. When developing learning materials, one should not forget that the main aim of adaptation is to add value to the materials to make them as appealing to students as possible. This aspect of materials development is even more important when speaking about a multilingual coursebook: in this case, the materials in all the target languages should go through adaptation and be in perfect sync with each other.

Materials production

In this respect, it is worth mentioning the conceptual linguistic engineering of professional identity and one of the necessary methods to single out, adapt and tailor the marital to the students' particular needs (Bagiyan & Shiryaeva, 2018). We believe this method would be ideal for segmenting the necessary axiologically- and pragmatically-charged language material which would help to adequately shape students' professional identity. The main objective of the method is to make a corpus of authentic materials and subject them to discourse-analysis, linguistic-conceptual analysis, pragma-axiological and socio-lexicographic analysis, after which categorize the materials into fragments ready to be used for materials production (see Shiryaeva et al., 2018). The discourse features need to be meaningful, salient, and frequently encountered; at the same time, the process of materials categorization should suit the contexts in which they are supposed to be used. One of the main criteria

of multilingual materials production is that the final corpus should help students achieve a much deeper multi-dimensional language processing and develop better cognitive control of their executive functions. Finally, we suggest giving a meaning-focused language-in-use experience when dealing with materials development, because the presence of more than three languages in one unit of a multilingual course package would make the form-focused experience too rigid and cumbersome to use.

Materials exploitation

It is our belief that a proper multilingual course package aimed at shaping students' professional identity via multiculturalism and global citizenship, needs to be based on the usage of authentic in-house professionally-oriented materials with the help of what we call "methodological divergence in multilingual learning" (Bagiyan & Baryshnikov, 2020). This method is somewhat close to that of principled eclecticism immersed in multilingual surroundings and incorporates student-initiated activities, a language-awareness approach, and a problem-based approach along with the kaizen principle of 'continuous development' and subtle but constantly increasing level of linguistic and cognitive difficulty of learning/teaching materials. Along with that, the method has an important cognitive descriptor according to which all the tasks and materials in a course package contribute to the development of students' cognitive abilities such as memory, attention, critical thinking, etc.

Need for published materials

Even though we do not fully agree with the Dogme ELT movement when it comes to using published materials (Nhat & Hung, 2020), it needs to be said that many modern coursebooks are quite rigid and difficult to use in isolation. That is why, following the initial principle of flexibility mentioned above, we propose a flexible course package with additional corpora of linguistic and thematic materials categorized and conceptualized in such a way that would help teachers find additional material and tailor it to the students' needs in a matter of minutes. Another important feature of these corpora is that they are supposed to be online and, thus, updated on a regular basis to provide both educators and students with cutting-edge materials.

At the same time, no matter how many "online interventions" a multilingual course package is going to face, we believe that real coursebooks are indispensable since they provide language learners with a system, a certain level of security, progress, and revision. So, the proposed corpora materials, as well as all the other potential CALL materials are to be used in parallel with the main coursebook material. Otherwise, the amount of information on more than 3 languages at a time without any 'live' material to fall back on would simply perplex students and make their command of language blurry and ineffective. All the mentioned features of published and online materials help to produce a series of web-based global 'multilingual transformer-coursebooks' which would offer opportunities for modification, replacement, and choice to facilitate "an ongoing process where materials are refined and even changed throughout the life of a product" (Amrani, 2011: 297).

Pedagogical approaches

I hold the view that current pedagogical approaches of multilingual education should mainly focus not only on the strictly language-based syllabus but rather on content and language integrated learning. This approach will help to shape students' professional identity via developing their linguistic knowledge and striving to create synergies between the target language(s) and other subjects. It is important to understand that such initiatives as an actionable framework for multisubject collaboration (García & Vázquez, 2012) could be a strong motivation to adopt a multilingual identity for students and teachers alike since this kind of collaboration would attach the learning and teaching of languages to a significantly larger number of domains (Nakamura, 2019). This, in turn, would help students and their teachers see the intersections and reinforcement of language and non-language subjects, as well as increasing the self-worth of all the participants of this educational process (Kouritzin et al., 2007).

The authenticity of texts and tasks

We hold the view that the process of multilingual learning/teaching should be based solely on authentic materials from the very beginning. At the same time, we would like to clarify our understanding of authenticity: "an authentic text is one which is produced to communicate rather than to teach, and an authentic task is one which involves the learners in communication in order to achieve an outcome, rather than practice the language" (Tomlinson, 2012: 162). We also claim that tasks should also be completely based on authentic materials - otherwise the students might not be prepared for real use of language(s). Finally, authentic materials encapsulate the greatest amount of axiological and pragmatic charge which is a top priority for an adequate professional identity formation.

Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

Living in a world of constant technological progress, it is very easy to get carried away and switch from implementing technology to facilitate learning to abusing it and drown in unlimited information resources. CALL is a double-edged sword: even though all its benefits are clear, it is important to bear in mind that too much technology could result in total capitulation to multi-tasking, rapid switching, and superficial processing of information, which is even more complicated in multilingual educational surroundings. This, in turn, could significantly impair more reflective and critically-oriented modes of thinking, to say nothing of students' working memory (Huang et al., 2020).

Taking into account the ubiquitous process of educational digitalization, it needs to be mentioned that, even though ICT has been making massive inroads into language classrooms in recent years, studies display considerable reluctance of teachers and their lack of confidence "in their ability to fully embrace a purely digital literacy-driven approach to the planning of individual lessons or as the balance for syllabus" (Allen, 2015: 258). Therefore, even a strong presence of CALL methods and techniques in the educational curriculum needs to be supported by (e-)printed coursebook materials (e.g. student's books, workbooks, teacher's books). In other words, electronic materials are a wonderful tool and are vital for proper professional identity formation in the 21st century, but their implementation should be regulated.

"Teacher <-> Student" identity formation

In the process of multilingual education, it is not only the student's identity that comes to the foreground but also the identity of the actual people 'behind the wheel' - teachers. It is extremely important to take into account teachers' set of beliefs regarding multilingualism: positively charged system of teacher's implicitly and explicitly held assumptions concerning the legitimacy of multilingual approach usually leads to a much more advanced cross- and metalinguistic awareness of their students and promotes a solid foundation for their multilingual identity (Haukås, 2016; Raud & Orehhova, 2020), whereas the lack of such beliefs results in a very fragmented and insufficient methodological approach to language teaching and, consequently, the development of students' executive cognition. The reason behind the logic is quite straightforward: "Some language teachers might find it difficult to adopt such a multilingual pedagogy in its entirety if they do not themselves subscribe to a multilingual identity" (Calafato, 2020; Fisher et al., 2020; Zheng, 2017). Therefore, it is of utmost importance to promote a multilingual identity on a global scale by encouraging teachers all over the world to adopt this multilingual identity themselves in order to pass it on to their students with the help of a multilingual pedagogy. It also needs to be said that teachers' identity and beliefs concerning multilingualism do not simply accumulate different experiences in the process of teaching; it is a much more synergistically complex interplay of their experiences along with language background, nationality, regional diversity, emotions, and specific school cultures (see Pennington & Richards, 2016).

Discussions

Speaking of different kinds of syllabi and their role in shaping students' professional identity, one of the main questions on the agenda is whether the multilingual syllabus should be synthetic or analytic. Our educated guess would be 'both': since each of them has its own merits and demerits, a methodologically 'win-win' situation could contain theoretical underpinnings and practical implementation of all the pros (language presentation in the form of functional and content chunks with their further segmentation into discreet linguistic items for proper presentation) with the elimination of all the cons (a dry presentation-production-practice grammar-based approach with a decontextualized presentation of language rules and no support of interlanguage development, on the one hand, and too much communicative use of target language with no emphasis on its linguistic properties, on the other hand) (Jordan & Gray, 2019; Mamaghani & Zolghadri, 2018).

The development of a multilingual professional identity in the light of global citizenship requires (1) the use of materials evaluation to set a scene for further materials production; (2) the use of authentic materials to stimulate more cerebral functions and whole-brain processing; (3) the use of conceptual linguistic engineering of professional identity as a holistic method of language materials segmentation and categorization; (4) the use of methodological divergence of multilingual learning/teaching to help students form their professional identities through the enhancement of their cognitive, axiological, pragmatic and habitual functions; (5) the use of proper materials adaptation to

make them more appealing to potential students; (6) simultaneous and balanced use of both electronic materials and 'live' coursebooks.

Conclusion

The current paper points out the main theoretical and methodological aspects of developing a multilingual course package necessary to adequately shape students' professional identity and their sense of global citizenship. Now that theoretical preliminaries are dealt with, the next logical step is to put theory into practice and develop an experimental multilingual coursebook for further piloting, evaluation and correction.

As much as any other mostly theoretical endeavor, this paper is not flawless and, therefore, the research behind it has certain limitations and points for further improvement:

- the investigation is currently in the initial stage of its development and provides solely theoretical underpinnings of the 'soon-to-be' multilingual coursebook ('set of resources').

- the main purpose of the coursebook is incredibly challenging and might even turn out to be paradigm-shifting in the sphere of Teaching Foreign Languages and Cultures; therefore, its theoretical foundation comprises many different fields and requires further substantial research to fine-tune its basic propositions. More action research is needed to understand how all these theories are to be implemented.

- when turning from theory to practice, the whole course package will have to go through a number of piloting stages and testing before a final draft is over; we hope to ask our colleges from other universities and colleges to give us a hand at putting the final draft to a test and, thus, through trial and error to improve the materials and ensure that they are useful resources for learning and teaching.

- the whole topic sets forth another important question: who are the teachers of multilingualism? Even though this particular question is not the topic of this paper, it still needs to be said that even with the best possible book on multilingual education, comprising all the theoretical and practical merits of modern SLA and FLT research, there should be a person qualified enough to guide students through this 'path of linguistic shadows'. Should a teacher be multilingual as well or is it better to have 2 different teachers working together and complementing each other? And if the first aspect is more preferable, the process of education of a multilingual teacher becomes of utmost importance (Vartanov & Bagiyan, 2020).

Nevertheless, we are sure that our team of researchers and professors at Pyatigorsk State University are going to give the above-mentioned aspects the exposure they deserve, both theoretically and practically speaking, while dealing with the next 'practical' phase of developing a multilingual course package for professional identity formation.

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