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ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING MATERIALS TITLES: LINGUOPRAGMATIC AND FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS

Evgenia V. Turlova (a)*

*Corresponding author

(a) Department of English Philology and Methods of Teaching English, Orenburg State University, 13, Pobedy Avenue, Orenburg, Russian Federation, orenburg05@yandex.ru

Abstract

Modern Russian market of English language teaching materials is saturated with various publications of foreign authors due to the fact that these educational and methodical complexes have the authenticity of educational texts, the presence of effective support, vivid illustrations, thematic glossaries, comments and texts of linguistic and cultural nature. These characteristics allow analyzing the English educational discourse from the point of view of the functional potential of small-format texts of the titles of teaching materials in order to identify their linguistic potential. As a result of the study such linguistic and pragmatic parameters of the English educational discourse have been identified as functional conditionality of the nominative paradigm, describing the main functions of the titles of small-format texts of English-language teaching materials. Expressive, appellative, and communicative functions are described. Structural elements of the titles are analyzed and fusions are found as the ones with the most persuasive and advertising effect. Linguocultural markers are classified indicating the most relevant content spheres in the titles of small-format texts and precedent phenomena are revealed belonging to the sphere of information technologies and internet communication. Analyzing the results of the study we can conclude that the linguistic and pragmatic parameters of the English educational discourse are determined by the expressive, persuasive and advertising effect of the language signs of the nominative paradigm of the English-language teaching materials titles.

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1. Introduction

The era of mass communication stimulates the development of specific methods of advertising and promoting of goods in various spheres of life and education is no exception. Educational organisations, funds, and publishing houses do their best to facilitate advancement of their products, teaching materials and resources in the market. The situation of competition between conventional and electronic textbooks and materials and their publishing houses is inevitable due to sharp activation of social factors like innovation in the field of communication means, improvement of design technologies, and the increase in reader and author's needs. There is a need not only to inform about a textbook, but to encourage its purchase using informative, expressive and suggestive language methods. The search for new and bright forms of presentation of the goods to a potential consumer begins, and this search largely determines the development of the design of textbooks and teaching materials. Another important factor that determines the relevance of research in the field of functioning of language and design of texts of printed educational products is the obvious trend towards internationalization of the market of educational textbooks. Various visual methods of presentation and transmission of information - computer games, special effects in cinema, virtual space, and external design of printed materials - are largely based on universal cognitive concepts that are easily decoded and recognized by carriers of various languages and cultures. This imaginative basis can be easily decoded by the recipients.

In this respect, it seems necessary to refer to the rich factual material of the modern English educational discourse, represented by the title complexes of authentic textbooks and teaching materials intended for the study of English as a foreign language. On the one hand, the textbook titles are nationally specific historical and cultural clusters of the English picture of the world. And on the other, these texts participate in the formation of a system of universally valid prototypical images, priorities, values, taking into consideration the orientation of authentic educational complexes on the international educational market.

2. Problem Statement

It is known that the phenomenon of "text" is studied from the standpoint of linguistics, philosophy, cultural studies, semiotics, communication theory and other related sciences. To date, there are a number of definitions of the concept of "text", but none of them is postulated as a norm. In this regard, discussions are held, first of all, on the question of which system the text belongs to: language or speech. However, the source position in the analysis of the text gives the following essence characteristics of it: integrity, anthropocentricity and informative value. The traditional understanding of the text expands its boundaries. The major factor in the development of text studies is emergence of new technologies. Combination of a written text and extra linguistic elements, as well as the need to take into account extra linguistic factors, raised a number of questions for the study of language. In this respect the mechanisms involved in the understanding of the new type of texts are unclear and need to be understood and described.

From this point of view, the appeal to small-format texts is particularly relevant, since the clarification of the linguistic status of the English educational textbooks and materials titles is undoubtedly an important subject of linguistic analysis.

3. Research Questions

In the course of the research, the following questions were set:

What are the characteristics of the English language teaching textbooks and materials titles as small-format texts?

What are the functions of the titles as small-format texts in English educational discourse?

What are linguopragmatic features of the titles as small-format texts? And how they add to the persuasive effect?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the research is to find out and describe functional paradigm and linguopragmatic effect produce by titles of English language teaching materials as small-format texts, namely:

characterise titles of the English language teaching materials as small-format texts;

point out functional characteristics of titles of the English language teaching materials as small-format texts in the English educational discourse;

describe linguopragmatic features of the titles in terms of the persuasiveness.

5. Research Methods

To describe particular methods used in the research we should mention that a number of significant research has been published on the theory of text and discourse. These studies represent methodological basis of our research in the field of theory of text and discourse (Arutyunova, 1990; Karasik, 2002; van Dijk, 2017); educational discourse (Aleksandrova, Mendzheritskaya, & Kharkovskaya, 2008; Edwards, Nicoll, Solomon, & Usher, 2013; Kharkovskaya, 2015; Luke, 1995), pragmatics (Leech, 2016); the theory of small-format texts (Kubryakova, 2001; Kharkovskaya, Ponomarenko, & Radyuk, 2017); theory of textbooks (Fuchs & Bock, 2018); normative characteristics of small-format texts (Kharkovskaya, 2015; Kubryakova, 2001; Rubert, 1990; Tayupova, 2017; Vedeneva, Kharkovskaya, & Malakhova, 2018).

The research was done on the material of 1300 titles of English textbooks and teaching materials of the following publishing houses Macmillan University Press, Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press, Carnet Education, The Pearson Longman, and Express Publishing. The bank of our research is the English language teaching materials which include titles of textbook, workbooks, CD disks, teacher books, online courses, recourses book and other parts of the pack.

6. Findings

To distinguish titles of the English language teaching materials as small-format texts it is necessary to determine educational discourse as an environment in which these types of texts function.

Linguists, working in the field of educational discourse, tried to give a definition of the phenomena limiting its boundaries to the status of educational text as a communicative act, organized for didactic purposes in meaningful, stylistic and composite relations (Kalinina, 2002; Karasik, 2002; Kharkovskaya, 2015). In this regard the educational text is an integral part of the information field of a textbook and is intended to control textual skills development. The ability to work with a text is the basis on which the system of knowledge in a special discipline is given, so the necessary skills and abilities are imparted to students at a specific stage of training. We believe it possible to consider the text space of a textbook as a discourse, namely – educational discourse, proceeding in the context of academic communication. There are several components in the structure of the written educational discourse of modern English language teaching materials. First of all, this structure includes components of the educational content, i.e. all communication signals and facts of culture of the target language, as well as verbal texts and graphic information (drawings, photographs, diagrams, symbols). At the same time, as components of the content, various text samples are included in a complex model of the educational process aimed at achieving practical, educational, educational and developmental goals.

It is possible in the course of our research consider the titles of English language materials as a small-format texts, which are relatively autonomous in the formal and semantic aspect of the phenomenon, but at the same time tend to be an integral part of the discourse of the textbook.

While a variety of definitions of the term ‘text’ have been suggested, this paper will use the definition first suggested by Kubryakova (2001) who saw small-format text as visible and observable in the smallest detail, and pointed out such distinctive features of these texts as separateness, isolation, formal and semantic self-sufficiency, thematic certainty and completeness. Moreover, such texts have clear information content, their cognitive background – the aim of its creation, its general idea and the result of its creation of a special language form in a special semantic space (Kubryakova, 2001). In course of our study it is most important to highlight the communicative and pragmatic parameters of small-format texts. Our research seems relevant to determine the linguistic status of the small-format texts of the English language teaching textbook titles depending on the communicative functions performed by them, along with ensuring persuasive effect. We refer the English language teaching textbook titles to such pragmatic functional small-format texts.

Analyzing the linguopragmatic composition of the modern English educational discourse, we consider it possible to distinguish such parameters as the functional targeting, precedent linguocultural markers, structural forms which help to achieve persuasive effect.

From the point of view of the structural organization of the titles of the English language teaching materials there can be 2 groups: predicative, in which there are expressed subject and predicate (*It's grammar time*. Retrieved from <https://www.expresspublishing.co.uk/ru/title-display/its-grammar-time>); non-predictive, consisting of a single word or phrase that does not create a coherent sentence with the main members (*Grammar in Use*. Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/ru/cambridgeenglish/catalog/adult-courses/grammar-use-intermediate-3rd-edition>). The largest group is the

group of non-predictive titles, which is 91.5 % of the total sample bank. This advantage over predication can be explained by the tendency to a concise nomination, which is a primary means of advertising. The results of the part-of-speech analysis in the structure of the titles show that nouns as a core element make up 72.7% in their composition of the total (*Choices*. Retrieved from <https://www.pearson.com/english/catalogue/secondary/choices.html>; *Viewpoint*. Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/ru/cambridgeenglish/catalog/adult-courses/viewpoint>; *Spark Grammar* Retrieved from <https://www.expresspublishing.co.uk/ru/title-display/spark-grammar>).

To present the results, we should distinguish the following functional characteristics of the small-format texts as components of the English written educational discourse. So, the *expressive* function focused on the transfer of the intentions and emotions of the author to the recipients creating a positive effect motivating students to study. The English language teaching textbook titles could be expressed by the wide use of adjectives and verbs or verbal forms of positive connotation: *Happy Hearts Starter* (Retrieved from <https://www.expresspublishing.co.uk/ru/content/happy-hearts-starter>); *New Success* (Retrieved from <https://www.pearson.com/english/catalogue/secondary/new-success.html>); *Gold experience* (Retrieved from <https://www.pearson.com/english/catalogue/exam-prep/gold-experience/gold-experience.html>); *Optimise* (Retrieved from <https://www.macmillan.ru/catalogue/3/223283/>).

The following markers of English educational discourse were found to state positive move, mobilize, create favourable situation and mark a new step in studying English: *New Language Leader* (Retrieved from <https://www.pearson.com/english/catalogue/general-english/new-language-leader.html>); *New Total English* (Retrieved from <https://www.pearson.com/english/catalogue/general-english/new-total-english.html>).

Persuasive effect on the addressee is produced through *appellative* function which calls for buying as well as motivates the students. At the language level this function is represented by direct calls for activity in the form of short phrases containing a verb in the form of the imperative mood: *Move it!* (Retrieved from <https://www.pearson.com/english/catalogue/secondary/move-it.html>); *Motivate!* (Retrieved from <https://www.macmillan.ru/catalogue/3/36852/>).

Also, this function can be implemented by indirect language means, giving direct information about quality or purpose of the educational. Metaphor in English educational discourse usually interprets some action or move in the direction of success in studies and development of language skills: *Breakthrough Plus* (Retrieved from <https://www.macmillan.ru/catalogue/6/348625/>); *Roadmap* (Retrieved from <https://www.pearson.com/english/catalogue/general-english/roadmap.html>); *Summit* (Retrieved from <https://www.pearson.com/english/catalogue/general-english/topnotch/summit-thirdedition.html>); *Upstream* (Retrieved from <https://www.expresspublishing.co.uk/ru/content/upstream-beginner-a1-1st-edition>).

Communicative function is designed to have an impact on the worldview of the addressee, by transmitting information about the English speaking world. The English language teaching textbook titles often express the main purpose of the textbook, the purpose of studying: *Macmillan Primary Grammar* (Retrieved from <https://www.macmillan.ru/catalogue/2/50/>); *American Speakout* (Retrieved from <https://www.pearson.com/english/catalogue/general-english/american-speakout.html>); *Cambridge*

English Empower (Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/ru/cambridgeenglish/catalog/adult-courses/cambridge-english-empower>).

One of the important linguopragmatic parameters of the English language teaching materials titles is the system of linguocultural markers. A significant result is the description of the key concepts and images system. At the lexical level these linguistic and cultural markers express units of language system, a specific aspect of learning English, types of speech activity in teaching English, level of language material of a textbook, competencies formed in the educational process, indicators of the age range of students, forms of assessment: *Communicating across cultures* (Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/ru/cambridgeenglish/catalog/business-professional-and-vocational/communicating-across-cultures>); *Professional English in use Management* (Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/ru/cambridgeenglish/catalog/business-professional-and-vocational/professional-english-use-management/professional-english-use-management-answers?format=PB>); *Lifestyle* (Retrieved from <https://www.pearson.com/english/catalogue/business-english/lifestyle.html>); *A2 Key 1 for the Revised 2020 Exam* (Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/ru/cambridgeenglish/catalog/cambridge-english-exams-ielts/a2-key-1-revised-2020-exam>).

The small-format texts under study may be a fragment of a textbook meta-discourse that includes the cover of a textbook that serves for advertising purposes in a printed catalogue or on Internet site offering online educational catalogues. At the same time, neither the form nor the content of the considered phenomenon of a small-format text, the title of the teaching material do not change. There is a redistribution of a hierarchical set of functions: advertising is essential in English language teaching catalogues and internet sites (in case of online shopping) and nominative and informational - in educational discourse. This is the phenomenon of interdiscursivity, when the same source text with a given set of structural and semantic characteristics is included in various types of discourse to solve specific communicative problems of the receiving (borrowing) discourse. Thus, the investigated functional and pragmatic parameters of small-format texts describe the titles of English language teaching materials as complicated discursive formations that combine a single field of interacting verbal and iconic signs that are part of the structural, semantic and functional whole.

Integrated channels of information transmission are becoming increasingly important due to the increasing proportion of visual images (icons, graphics) used in the titles of English language teaching materials.

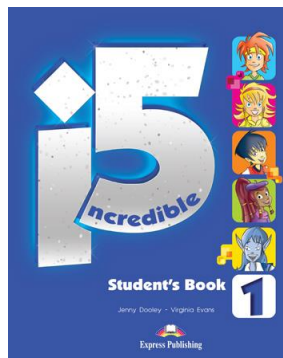


Figure 01. The cover of the textbook “Incredible 5” (Evans & Dooley, 2017)

Modern consumer of information has extremely developed imaginative thinking, and prefers visual formats; the younger generation of recipients is focused mainly on the audiovisual perception of the world. This tendency is amply illustrated with factual material (figure 01): Incredible 5 (Evans & Dooley, 2017).

The image presents a vivid example of fusion of a language sign, a number in a picture creating composite impact on the recipient of the textbook. We should mention that such complex titles function as labels of the educational courses and are placed on the cover pages and cover of CD-disks of the whole pack of the course.

Considering the compositional components, lexical and syntactic content and actualization of communicative strategies of advertising in the title complex of the textbook, it is necessary to highlight the following nuclear models that reflect the current trends of language variation in the English educational discourse: *MyGrammarLab* (Retrieved from <https://www.pearson.com/english/login-register/digital/my-grammar-lab.html>); *face2face* (Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/ru/cambridgeenglish/catalog/adult-courses/face2face-2>). These titles represent a fusion of some lexical signs and numbers written in one word or beginning with a lowercase letter. Thus, it is possible to consider the fusion titles as a new way of impact and form of advertising in English educational discourse.

The most interesting result of the content analysis is the elements of the sphere of information and internet technologies in the composition of small-format texts of English language teaching materials. Such components are persuasive and add to the advertising power of the textbook titles: *Infotech* (Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/ru/cambridgeenglish/catalog/business-professional-and-vocational/infotech-4th-edition>); *Online grammar practice* (Retrieved from <https://www.oxfordenglishtesting.com/defaultmr.aspx?id=4336>); *The Business 2.0* (Retrieved from <https://www.macmillan.ru/catalogue/6/37002/>). Thus, the pragmatic orientation of the titles of the English language teaching materials to inform and to advertise is confirmed references to Web 2.0 and precedent phenomena of the sphere of information technology.

7. Conclusion

This paper has argued that functional paradigm and linguopragmatic effect produced by the titles of English language teaching materials are determined by small-format texts potential to attract attention and persuade the percipient to buy a textbook or study and achieve the aim. The analysis of the structural elements in the composition of small-format texts found that the core element in most titles is a noun and optional ones are fusions, which are not numerous but have sufficient persuasive and advertising effect. The analysis of the macro structural organization of the English language materials small-format texts allows us to conclude that there is a significant degree of unification of the structure of this type of texts.

The key concepts of the English language teaching materials titles were pointed out, represented by linguistic and cultural markers - units of language system, a specific aspect of learning English, types of speech activity in teaching English, level of language material of a textbook, competencies formed in the educational process, indicators of the age range of students, forms of assessment.

This study has shown that persuasive and advertising effect is achieved in course of realisation of the expressive, appellative and communicative functions with the help of words with positive meaning, colourful metaphors and deliberate violation of grammar rules in fusions. The English language teaching materials titles represent a system of measures of targeted impact on the consumer. This study has found that generally graphic means function along with linguistic and cultural ones to intensify the persuasive effect of the small-format texts. In general linguopragmatic and functional potential of the English language teaching materials titles is achieved through cohesion of advertising and persuasive linguistic and extra linguistic techniques.

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