

## WAYS OF IMPROVING THE CONTENT OF MODERN UKRAINIAN LITERATURE TEXTBOOKS CONSIDERING CONSTRUCTIVE HISTORICAL ACHIEVEMENTS

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**Abstract.** The article is devoted to finding effective ways to improve the content of modern textbooks on Ukrainian literature. The need to introduce the experience of teaching Ukrainian literature of previous historical periods, which provided for the widespread use in the educational process of the concept of the hero as an example to follow, a means of forming patriotism, moral and ethical values of the Ukrainian nation. The general didactic and specific requirements to the modern textbook on the Ukrainian literature are investigated, the most necessary conditions for creation of new textbooks are defined (high-content art texts making the real spiritual heritage of national culture, aesthetic and moral and ethical weight, because the emotional perception of the artistic image has a significant impact on the reader). The peculiarities of interpretation of images of heroes of folklore and literary works in critical and didactic articles of modern textbooks for primary school, as well as the task of external independent evaluation of Ukrainian literature in recent years to fill educational material that promotes patriotic and heroic virtues. It is established that the modern education system should promote the national ideology aimed at serving society, the formation of a citizen-democrat, humanist and patriot (one of the means of such activities is a textbook on Ukrainian literature). It is proved that the challenges of time determine the need to create textbooks on Ukrainian literature, which would: contribute to the formation of a thorough system of knowledge in student youth; presented different points of view on the evaluation of works of art and images of heroes; demonstrated the personal beliefs of literary heroes; contained brief historical references to certain events from works of art; popularized the passionate type of the hero as the embodiment of the best features of the national character of the individual.

**Keywords:** textbook, Ukrainian literature, image of a hero, patriotism, heroism, national ideology.

**JEL Classification:** I 23, I 29

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**Introduction.** The analysis of current government documents once again confirms the necessity of implementing the teaching experience of previous historical periods in the instruction of Ukrainian literature. This experience involves the widespread application of the concept of the hero as an example to follow and as a means of fostering patriotism and moral-ethical values of the Ukrainian nation in the educational process. The national hero of the passionate type, devoid of ideological, colorless, and de-nationalized patriotism of the Soviet type, which finds vivid portrayal in literary works, holds special didactic, educational, and methodological value today.

The curriculum for Ukrainian literature, which defines the activities of educators, should correspond to the textbook. The main functions of the textbook include enriching literary knowledge, teaching the analysis of literary works, promoting reflection on the problems within the literary work, and encouraging creativity, among other things.

**Literature review.** O. Bandura has made a significant contribution to the development of the theory of modern textbook creation. She is the author of works such as "Scientific Foundations of Literature Textbooks (Grades 4-10)" [3] and "School Textbook of Ukrainian Literature" [4]. As a scholar and methodologist, she emphasizes the need for a universal content of textbooks that satisfies the main aspects of literary education in schools. She discusses the content and format of textbooks and anthologies of Ukrainian literature for primary and upper grades, as well as the content and structure of theoretical-literary articles, bibliographic references, methodological tools, techniques for analyzing literary works, the development of oral and written language skills, the connection between teaching literature and the present, interdisciplinary connections, and the structure and artistic-technical design of educational books.

According to the scholar, textbooks on Ukrainian literature should be structured according to "thematic lines" that collectively constitute the process of studying literature in secondary school. These thematic lines include: 1) students acquiring the most important facts about the author's life; 2) presenting the key characteristics of the literary process during the period under study; 3) analytical and synthetic work with the text of a literary work; 4) developing students' skills in school analysis; 5) fostering artistic and logical thinking; 6) enhancing oral communication skills; 7) incorporating a system of written assignments; 8) students mastering basic and essential knowledge of expressive reading theory and developing corresponding skills based on that knowledge; 9) teaching elements of literary theory and equipping students with the ability to apply this knowledge in their language practice; 10) helping students understand the fundamental patterns and trends in the development of literature as a verbal art form; 11) establishing the connection between literature and life; 12) linking the teaching of literature with the contemporary context; 13) emphasizing intra-subject and interdisciplinary connections; 14) fostering students' ability for self-directed learning; 15) providing a system of homework tasks; and 16) incorporating extracurricular and out-of-school activities related to literature [3, p. 13].

In her work "Scientific Foundations of Literature Textbooks (Grades 4-10)" (1978), O. Bandura first formulated requirements for the methodological apparatus of textbooks, which were subsequently improved in accordance with the demands of the time and presented in the research study "School Textbook on Ukrainian Literature" (2001).

The main requirements include: taking into account the logic of the learning process and the subject itself; considering the peculiarities of perception by students of the corresponding age group for various types of educational material (literary, logical); encouraging students to perform various mental operations; stimulating the imagination and creativity of students, enriching their emotions; matching the level of intellectual development and being accessible to students, taking into account their previously acquired skills and abilities to acquire knowledge; determining the number of questions and tasks based on the time allocated for studying a specific material; being part of a

unified system of work, ensuring consistency across all school textbooks on all topics, the combination of which constitutes the process of studying literature in middle school; ensuring the formation in students of a clear, sufficiently comprehensive system of well-understood and firmly assimilated knowledge, which serves as the basis for aesthetic and moral education of a young citizen of independent Ukraine, its worker, and defender [3, p. 30].

**Aims.** The main aim of this study is to outline the ways to improve the content of modern textbooks, taking into account the teaching experience of Ukrainian literature from previous historical periods, particularly the wider application of the concept of a hero as an example for emulation and a means of shaping patriotism and moral-ethical values of the Ukrainian nation within the educational process.

**Methods.** The main methods that were used in the research are: methods of comparative analysis, didactic methods and techniques, analysis and synthesis, as well as generalization.

**Results.** Today, the Ukrainian literature textbook plays a significantly smaller role compared to other subjects, as the priority is given not to the educational text, but to the literary text, which is intended for individual interpretation. As noted by B. Stepanyshyn, "a semi-fictional form of the school textbook on literature would ensure its readability. In addition to being scientific and truthful, it should undoubtedly be popular, captivating, written in the form of an imaginary literary journey, an associative narrative, a problem-oriented exposition, or a series of sketches" [11, p. 49].

General didactic and specific requirements for a modern Ukrainian literature textbook are highlighted by the contemporary renowned methodologist H. Tokman. The general didactic requirements include: compliance of the content with the level of contemporary science; correspondence of the content and presentation form to the child's age characteristics; systematic and sequential presentation (progressing from the known to the unknown, from the simple to the complex); stimulating students' interest in knowledge and independent exploration; precision, simplicity, and liveliness of language; implementation of educational objectives.

Specific requirements for a literature textbook are determined by the artistic nature of the subject of study and the personal perception and interpretation of the literary work. These requirements include: the presence of a national idea, convincing students of the talent of the Ukrainian people, the richness, spirituality, and aesthetic qualities of national literature; selection of scientific information taking into account both academic interpretations of the work and partially new interpretations, which stimulate independent thinking; dialogical exploration of the writer's biography and their works, involving information from cultural history, philosophy, and psychology; presenting each writer not as a canonized classic, but as an individual. The textbook should help students understand the artist in the conditions in which they created; reflecting the Ukrainian literary process as a whole, regardless of whether the artists lived in Ukraine or in emigration; using a narrative, descriptive, associative, and captivating style in presenting educational material; quality illustrations.

The methodological apparatus of a modern textbook should be aimed at "developing the student's creative abilities and their emotional-value sphere" [9, p. 7].

The development of the student's emotional-value sphere is facilitated by the following: the use of phonograph recordings of folk songs and examples of domestic and world classical music, in accordance with the content of the textbook; reproductions of paintings and artistic illustrations; inclusion of texts of high aesthetic and moral-ethical value in textbooks, as well as tasks that involve active engagement of students in diverse analysis and interested discussion of the information contained therein; organization of students' understanding of the life paths and personal qualities of the most prominent figures in national and world history and culture; the use of characters who exemplify expressive and personal attitudes towards the surrounding world in textbooks [9, p. 7].

O. Savchenko identified the main functions of a textbook that contribute to the reader's competence of the student, which include: informational, motivational, educational, developmental, and she adds two more - technological (which enables the creation of task systems that promote the development of students' reading competence, management of processes of understanding the text by students, formation of skills in analysis, comparison, generalization, establishing cause-and-effect relationships, formation of project activity experience, etc.) and illustrative (which teaches working with symbolic information, provides developmental and stimulating influence on the development of students' reading competences, motivates them for educational-cognitive activities) [8, pp. 208-209].

The researcher identified principles on which a modern textbook on Ukrainian literature should be based, including: the multi-component nature of the reading content; selection of works whose content has a significant educational impact on the reader; works with significant informational potential and works that contribute to students' motivation for self-education and self-development [8, p. 209].

Taking into account the aforementioned points, we believe that the most crucial condition for creating new textbooks should be the inclusion of highly meaningful literary texts that represent true spiritual treasures of national culture, possessing aesthetic and moral-ethical weight, and contributing to the formation of a sense of patriotism. The analysis of character images holds significant importance, as the emotional perception of a fictional character exerts a substantial influence on the reader.

These criteria are precisely taken into account in the textbook "Ukrainian Literature" for the 5th grade by R. Movchan (Kyiv, 2006), where students are introduced to fairy tales such as "Krasny Ivan and the Enchanted City," "The Firebird and the Wolf," and short stories like A. Lototsky's "Mykhailo the Seven-Year-Old," I. Lypa's "The Twins," O. Olesa's "Mykita Kozhумыака," I. Nechuy-Levytsky's "The Cossacks," and O. Senatovych's "Maly Viz." The accompanying tasks and questions aim at developing critical thinking, attentive reading, summarizing the material, as well as highlighting the best qualities of individuals and the characteristics of the Ukrainian national hero [7]. A significant portion of the literary works included in the textbook is oriented towards fostering strong patriotic sentiments, cultivating virtues of a well-rounded personality, and nurturing the capacity for heroic deeds in the name of the homeland and the nation.

The textbook for the 5th grade now includes folk tales with heroic themes, such as "Admission to the Zaporozhian Cossacks" and "Oh Moroze-Morozenko," which provide

an understanding of the virtues of knights celebrated in folklore. The historical past of our people is presented in the textbook through excerpts from "The Tale of Bygone Years," which depict the heroism of princes Sviatoslav, Yaroslav, warriors, and others. The reflective tasks aim to guide children in understanding the key characteristics of the national hero and the qualities of a well-rounded individual during the period of Kyivan Rus. The main character of the fairy tale "Mykita Kozhummyaka" is revealed to the students as a defender of public interests, a person with extraordinary strength and bravery [6].

The textbook for the 6th grade (Movchan R., 2006) introduces students to the beauty of Ukrainian folk songs and the fundamental philosophical categories: World, Earth, Field, Temple, Father and Mother, along with family and calendar rituals of Ukrainians.

The material of the textbook is divided into several thematic sections that familiarize students with the ancient history of Ukraine, the life and struggle of the Ukrainian people for freedom. This helps to foster patriotic sentiments, an understanding of the beauty of folk art, and instills respect and love for the native language. "Before the reader stands a great, beautiful, and mysterious world that exists only in childhood. It is filled with boundless kindness, humor, love, and humanity, and unique family warmth. From such a world of their childhood, a person draws strength and courage for further life, which awaits them with many challenging trials" [7, p. 93].

In the textbook for 7th grade, edition 2016, folk songs are presented as a special source of spirituality, love, national self-awareness, while Cossack folklore is interpreted as an embodiment of patriotic sentiments, evidence of readiness to defend the Motherland, and exemplifies the exploits of Ukrainian knights and the high moral culture of Ukrainians. The author of the textbook draws students' attention to the significant patriotic pathos of the song "Oy na hori ta zhenetsi zhnut" (Oh, on the mountain, reapers are harvesting), which is filled with "great respect for the Cossacks and leaders of the Zaporozhian Army - hetmans, who became true national heroes. In the work, their images are glorified and poetized, and every detail emphasizes their loyalty to the knightly oath. The exceptional role played by the Cossacks in the history of Ukraine is emphasized" [7, p. 20]. The importance of Cossack songs in the spiritual upbringing of contemporary Ukraine is also highlighted. It is commendable that creative tasks for the section "From the Song Treasures" are designed for a deeper understanding of information about the heroes of our land. In particular, students are encouraged to select reproductions of paintings dedicated to the history of Ukrainian Cossacks, hetmans of Ukraine, and special events in the life of the Zaporozhians; compile a special explanatory dictionary of Cossack equipment, clothing, and weapons; prepare essays and presentations about Petro Doroshenko and Petro Sahaidachny, highlighting their heroic deeds; organize a thematic evening with performances of Cossack songs and a presentation of the collected material, dedicated to our ancestors, and so on.

The textbook provides information about heroic-romantic novels, where the romantic hero is portrayed as a character "built on the principle of sharp contrast with the traits of an average contemporary, that is, a person with high spiritual aspirations, strong character, capable of extraordinary deeds. The heroes of romantic works are exceptional

individuals who, in the name of a lofty goal, overcome all obstacles, disregard dangers to their own lives, selflessly defend their loved ones, and all those who suffer and need help" [7, p. 98].

In the textbook for 8th grade (2008 edition), a significant portion of the material has a patriotic focus. While studying epic poems and historical songs, students are encouraged to characterize their favorite image of a historical figure, a knight-defender of the native land, as created by the collective imagination in historical songs. The set of tasks for these sections aims to develop the ability to express judgments about why the people immortalize the names of their heroes and to comprehend the main virtues of their heroic ancestors (chivalry, bravery, physical and spiritual strength) [2, p. 23]. The role of folklore in shaping one's personality and fostering the best moral qualities in people today is emphasized.

The individual research tasks for the poem "The Tale of Igor's Campaign" are aimed at shaping in the younger generation eternal universal values such as love for the native land, patriotism, faithfulness in love, and respect for folk traditions.

During the analysis of V. Samiilenko's poem "Patriots," the focus is placed on the traits of true patriotism, while condemning empty "chatter" of so-called "self-proclaimed patriots" and the like.

In 2016, a new textbook titled "Ukrainian Literature" for 8th grade was introduced, which corresponds to the new requirements for teaching the discipline in schools. The content of the textbook underwent changes. Unfortunately, "The Tale of Igor's Campaign" was removed from the textbook, and instead, a section titled "From Contemporary Ukrainian Poetry (late 20th - early 21st century)" was introduced. This section includes works by V. Herasymiuk such as "Dance from the Depths of Centuries" and "Men's Dance," which were previously studied in 7th grade, as well as A. Moisiienko's "October Yellow Acorns," I. Pavliuk's "The Girl," H. Kirpa's "My Angel is So Small," and "When It's Dark Night to You." The content of the section "From Ukrainian Prose" underwent significant changes, with the removal of works by O. Nazaruk and the introduction of O. Dovzhenko's "Night Before the Battle," N. Bichui's "Slavko Burchak's Sword," and Yu. Vynnychuk's "A Place for the Dragon." These mentioned works are rich in heroic themes and also depict the lives of adolescents, teaching them kindness, sincerity, and humanity in their relationships with both people and animals, as well as with nature.

The interpretation of character images in textbooks by other authors in 2016 does not differ from the analyzed one [5; 6; 7; 9;10;12].

In the textbook for 9th grade, there are critical articles about "The Tale of Bygone Years," the works of I. Vyshensky, and the Cossack Chronicles provide brief information about the heroic past of our people, the bravery of Rus' princes, and so on.

The subsection dedicated to the works of H. Skovoroda highlights the ideal of a philosopher through the citation of fragments from his fables. The lyrical hero of the poem "To Every City - Tradition and Rights" is characterized as a wise individual with a pure conscience and thoughts. The textbook cites the poem "De Libertate" ("About Freedom") as an example of high patriotic lyrics, where the lyrical hero is portrayed as a

supporter of freedom who "rejects comparing this human good to gold" [1, p. 87]. B. Khmelnytsky is referred to as a symbol of freedom, glorified by H. Skovoroda.

The philosophical legacy of the artist received a diametrically opposite evaluation compared to the textbooks of the Soviet era. O. Avramenko and H. Dmytrenko view it not as a "gloomy world of church dogmas and rituals" but as a "realm of renewed truths, critical reason, and enlightened spirit," where "the spirit of man is cheerful, thoughts are calm, and the heart is peaceful" [1, p. 89]. The authors emphasize the importance of the concept of God and God's wisdom, highlighting the meaning of the concept of "happiness" in the philosopher's legacy and his interpretation of humans as the highest and most beautiful creation of God, who can attain happiness only through self-knowledge [1, p. 90].

The poem "Eneida" by I. Kotliarevsky is interpreted in the textbook as a source of social and moral-ethical problems, among which the most prominent are the defense of the native land against enemies, a sense of civic duty, upbringing of children, the affirmation of human virtues, and the depiction of human flaws. The main character of the poem is portrayed in a positive context in the final parts of the poem, which depict scenes of war: "He is clever, friendly, handsome, and agile, easily getting along with people. As the leader of the Trojans, Aeneas is demanding and strict, but kind and just, constantly caring for his warriors and grieving for the fallen" [1, p. 113]. Therefore, the character of the poem is delineated as a brave, courageous, skillful, and physically accomplished individual.

When examining Taras Shevchenko's poem "Haidamaky," the authors of the textbook emphasize the heroism of the Ukrainian insurgent people, which is exemplified in the images of national heroes such as Yarema, Honta, Zalizniak, Volokh, the kobzar, and the Zaporozhian Cossack, among others. Ivan Honta is presented in the critical materials as an embodiment of the ideal patriotic hero who sacrifices the most precious things for the sake of loyalty to his oath and the ideals of the uprising.

During the study of the poet's creative legacy, students become acquainted with the concept of the "lyrical hero" and analyze the artist's works through the prism of the lyrical hero, who is often likened to the author and embodies his aesthetic ideal.

The critical materials provide a new explanation of Taras Shevchenko's attitude towards religion, interpreting specific words of the artist about prayer and his relationship with God, emphasizing his religiousness: "My only solace now is the Gospel. I read the New Testament with reverent trembling. I read it every day, every hour" [1, p. 250].

The characters of the novel-chronicle "Chorna Rada" by Panteleimon Kulish are examined through the prism of national history, mentality, and character, as embodiments of certain ideas: Yakiv Shram and Ivan Somko represent the idea of Ukrainian statehood; the Kobzar and the Divine Man embody moral purity, spiritual self-improvement, and are elevated to the image of the prophet from Walter Scott's works and Perebend from Taras Shevchenko's works; Kyrylo Tur represents the embodiment of Zaporizhian freedom, Cossack chivalry, and living according to the dictates of the heart; Cherevan symbolizes a happy and prosperous life in a rural homestead; Lesya and Petro Shram represent a family idyll that symbolizes faith in the

indestructibility of Ukrainians and Ukraine. The Ukrainian nature of the characters in the work is emphasized as they sing folk songs, creating a corresponding atmosphere ranging from heroic and solemn to dreamy-romantic and humorous-entertaining.

The significance of the novel in Ukrainian literature is emphasized by Borys Hrinchenko's words that this work is a melancholy and longing "for better times, for the desire to break free from bondage, in that surge towards heroic deeds that awaken in the Ukrainian reader under the influence of 'Chorna Rada'" [1, p. 267].

The literature of the 20th century is represented in the textbook through the works of I. Bagryany ("Tigrolovi"), I. Lypa (Prichchi), and V. Herasymiuk ("Kosmatskyi Uzir," "Cholovychy Tanets," "Persnyi Snih"). In the works of I. Bagryany, the tragedy of the individual in a totalitarian society is revealed, but literary scholars emphasize the triumph of humanity (kindness, compassion, bravery, faith in victory) over the godless and cruel Soviet empire. The main idea of V. Herasymiuk's poems is explained to students as the interconnection of generations, the significance of the spiritual achievements of previous generations for contemporary people, the necessity of unity with the native land, which gives strength to create the future of the state.

Thus, modern textbooks on Ukrainian literature include the best examples of national cultural heritage, rich in moral, ethical, and patriotic content. Research has shown that the national folklore heritage and its heroes continue to play a significant didactic and educational role in developing critical thinking, a high level of patriotism, and individual heroic qualities in students. The interpretation of the hero in critical articles is aimed at the emotional perception of the artistic image by the reader and a better understanding of the work. It is necessary to strengthen the educational tasks of textbooks on Ukrainian literature, which should be fulfilled during students' study of ancient literature and works of the 20th century. The pedagogical potential of the heroes of these works has not been sufficiently explored in the critical articles of current textbooks.

**Discussion.** It is quite evident that the primary task of modern educational practice is to promote the national ideology of serving the Motherland, a necessity emphasized by M. Hrushevsky, H. Vashchenko, V. Vynnychenko, I. Kotliarevsky, P. Kulish, H. Skovoroda, I. Franko, T. Shevchenko, and others. The idea of an independent, highly civilized, strong, democratic state, where the free development of individuals and society takes place, should be reflected in the process of creating school textbooks, especially those on Ukrainian literature, which would fully disseminate the national ideology aimed at serving an independent Ukraine, creating a free society, and shaping citizens who are democrats, humanists, and patriots.

Taking the above into account, the ideological and moral component of a modern textbook on Ukrainian literature, in our opinion, should meet the following requirements: contribute to the formation of a solid knowledge base in young students as a foundation for patriotic, civic, aesthetic, moral, and vocational education; present various interpretations of literary works and character portrayals, as well as provide materials for discussions that enable students to draw their own conclusions and judgments; demonstrate diverse perspectives of literary characters; include historical documents that explain unclear fragments from literary works; popularize the passionate

type of hero as an embodiment of the best qualities of the national character, someone who overcomes any obstacles for a noble cause, disregards dangers, and selflessly defends the Motherland and its people.

**Conclusion.** Thus, in 21st-century textbooks on Ukrainian literature, the didactic and methodological apparatus is aimed at the emotional perception of the artistic image by the reader, better assimilation of the work, and understanding of the traits of the national character of the hero – a fighter for Ukraine's independence.

The modern education system should promote a national ideology aimed at serving society and shaping citizens who are democrats, humanists, and patriots. One of the means of such activity is a textbook on Ukrainian literature. The challenges of our time necessitate the creation of textbooks on Ukrainian literature that: contribute to the formation of a solid knowledge base in young students; present different perspectives on the evaluation of literary works and character portrayals; demonstrate the personal convictions of literary characters; include brief historical background information on events depicted in literary works; popularize the passionate type of hero as an embodiment of the best qualities of the national character.

The conducted research does not claim to be exhaustive in addressing the issue. Further development requires the use of innovative teaching technologies in the study of works with a heroic content in general secondary education institutions.

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