PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF DEVELOPING MULTIMODAL WRITING COMPETENCE OF PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS

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Abstract. This thesis examines the psychological and pedagogical foundations of developing multimodal writing competence of pre-service English teachers. It analyses sociocultural, cognitive and motivational theories that explain how learners make meaning by combining language, image, sound and layout, and describes the pedagogical approaches that support the development of this competence in a digital learning environment.

Keywords: pre-service English teacher, multimodal writing competence, digital multimodal composing, multiliteracies, sociocultural theory, multimedia learning, self-efficacy.

Ongoing reforms in foreign language education and the digital transformation of higher education in Uzbekistan require future English teachers not only to write accurately, but also to create, evaluate and teach texts that combine verbal, visual and audio modes of communication. Today, young people read and write through presentations, blogs, infographics, digital stories and social media posts. However, writing courses in teacher education often remain product-oriented and focused mainly on paper-based essays. Therefore, identifying the psychological and pedagogical foundations of developing multimodal writing competence of pre-service English teachers is an important theoretical task.

The idea of multimodal writing goes back to the New London Group, who argued that literacy pedagogy must take into account the growing variety of communication channels and the linguistic and cultural diversity of modern societies [1]. In second language education this practice is studied as digital multimodal composing. Research shows that it increases learners' engagement and investment in English writing and develops their awareness of audience [2]. On this basis, multimodal writing competence of a pre-service English teacher can be defined as an integrated ability to select, combine and evaluate linguistic, visual, audio and spatial resources in order to create meaningful texts for a particular purpose and audience, together with readiness to teach this ability to learners.

Several psychological theories explain how this competence develops. First, according to L.S. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, higher mental functions develop through mediation by tools and signs and through collaboration within the zone of proximal development [3]. In multimodal writing, digital tools such as presentation, design and video-editing applications, as well as generative AI, act as mediating artefacts, while peer and teacher feedback provides scaffolding. Second, R.E. Mayer's cognitive theory of multimedia learning shows that people learn more deeply from words and pictures together than from words alone, provided that the material is designed to avoid unnecessary cognitive load [4]. For writing instruction, this means that students should learn to coordinate modes purposefully rather than add images only for decoration. Third, A. Bandura's concept of self-efficacy emphasizes that learners' beliefs in their own capabilities determine their effort and persistence [5]. Successfully completed multimodal products give students mastery experiences and strengthen their confidence as writers in English.

Fourth, the motivational side of multimodal writing can be explained by the model of investment proposed by R. Darvin and B. Norton, according to which learners invest in language practices when these practices connect with their identities and promise access to valued social and symbolic resources [6]. When pre-service teachers create digital stories, posters or blogs for real audiences, they position themselves not only as language learners but also as authors and future professionals. This shift of identity increases their responsibility for the quality of the text and encourages them to revise their work more carefully. Thus, the psychological basis of developing multimodal writing competence includes mediation, cognitive processing, self-efficacy and identity-related investment.

From the pedagogical point of view, the development of multimodal writing competence is based on the competence-based approach, which integrates knowledge, skills and values; on the pedagogy of multiliteracies, which combines situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing and transformed practice [1]; on the process-genre approach, in which students plan, draft, receive peer feedback and revise their texts with attention to genre and audience; and on project-based learning with authentic communicative tasks.

The process-genre approach is especially productive in a digital environment, because it combines knowledge of text types with attention to the stages of the writing process [7]. In

multimodal writing these stages acquire new content. At the planning stage, students analyse model texts of the target genre, define their audience and prepare a storyboard or mind map. At the drafting stage, they compose the verbal text and select images, sound or layout that support its message. At the feedback stage, they comment on each other's drafts using online tools and assessment criteria. At the revising and publishing stages, they improve the coherence between modes and present the final product to an authentic audience, for example on a class blog or at a student conference. Such an organisation makes the writing process visible and teaches students to reflect on every decision they make.

For pre-service teachers, however, it is not enough to master multimodal writing only as users. They also need to know how to plan lessons, select tools and assess learners' multimodal texts. The TPACK framework developed by P. Mishra and M.J. Koehler shows that effective teaching with technology requires the integration of technological, pedagogical and content knowledge rather than their separate development [8]. Therefore, writing courses in pedagogical universities should include tasks in which students design mini-lessons on multimodal writing, try them with peers and discuss their effectiveness. In this way, students develop both their own writing competence and the didactic readiness to teach it.

Based on the above, the following psychological and pedagogical features of developing multimodal writing competence of pre-service English teachers can be distinguished:

1. *Mediational feature* – purposeful use of digital tools as a means of thinking and meaning-making.

2. *Cognitive feature* – planning, selecting and integrating modes while managing cognitive load.

3. *Motivational feature* – interest in writing for real audiences and belief in one's own abilities.

4. *Reflective feature* – analysing one's own and peers' multimodal texts and revising them.

5. *Communicative-collaborative feature* – co-creating texts and exchanging feedback in groups.

6. *Didactic feature* – awareness of how to teach multimodal writing to future learners.

These features can be developed effectively if tasks are based on national and cultural content (for example, digital stories about the cultural heritage of Uzbekistan), digital tools are introduced gradually, clear assessment criteria are provided, and generative AI is used critically and transparently.

In conclusion, developing multimodal writing competence of pre-service English teachers is a complex psychological and pedagogical process that is closely connected with the development of their cognitive, motivational, reflective and professional abilities. Integrating digital multimodal composing into writing courses of pedagogical universities on the basis of sociocultural, cognitive and motivational theories will help prepare English teachers who can both create and teach the kinds of texts that modern communication demands.

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