

UDC 027.7:378.147

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The Role and Place of the Library as an Information Centre in the Process of Learning Foreign Languages

Objective. This paper provides an overview of the importance and place of the library in foreign language learning. The purpose of the article is to study the role and place of the Scientific Library of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv as an information centre in the process of learning foreign languages. **Methods.** The paper uses a set of theoretical research methods, in particular: analysis, synthesis, generalisation, abstraction, interpretation, as well as comparative, descriptive and comparison methods. **Results.** The results of this research, as well as the conclusions drawn on their basis, are of practical value for lecturers, teachers and students interested in using libraries to improve the process of learning foreign languages. **Conclusions.** The study has shown that modern libraries are powerful information centres that not only create a comfortable environment for the cultural development of students, but also for their educational development, including when learning foreign languages.

Keywords: library; information resource; library collections; electronic resources; foreign languages; foreign language communicative competence

Introduction

Modern society is undergoing dynamic transformations driven by globalisation and technological progress. In this context, libraries remain important social institutions that are rethinking their role to meet new needs and demands. Today, the role of libraries is not limited to preserving and providing access to information resources, but they are also becoming centres of educational, cultural and social life. Today, libraries play a special role in the educational process, because as the main social institutions that collect, store and provide socially useful information, they form information resources, which are generally a concentrated array of documented information that communicates knowledge from all areas of society (Zhalko & Liashuk, 2023). Libraries offer not only traditional printed materials, but also multimedia, digital resources and online services, which makes them indispensable in the learning process, especially in the course of learning foreign languages. All of this makes it important to study the role and place of libraries as information centres in foreign language learning in the context of informatisation and globalisation of society. Studying and understanding their role and place in the process of learning foreign languages will help to optimise their activities and maximise their potential in the modern information society (Onyshchenko, 2021).

It should be noted that modern Ukrainian and foreign researchers are quite actively engaged in studying the problems of the peculiarities of the activity, role and place of libraries in the process of learning foreign languages. For example, the American researcher K. Ibacache (2019) analysed the use of foreign language learning applications by academic librarians as a tool for learning foreign languages. Her study is based on a survey sent to librarians and university librarians at the University of Colorado at Boulder, two professional library organisations, and randomly selected employees of 74 university libraries across the United States. The results of the study showed that librarians and academic library staff use language learning apps. However, there is a need for language learning apps that cover broader content, including reading comprehension and other foreign language skills suitable for academic libraries (Ibacache, 2019). The researcher M. Mantilla conducted a study aimed at identifying and assessing the level of digital knowledge, digital skills and the level of digital technology

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use by librarians and library staff who are members of the MUNPARLAS Library Association. The study showed that the respondents have a very high level of digital skills, digital knowledge and the level of use of digital technologies. The scientist concluded that digital literacy is very important in librarianship, and therefore it is necessary to continue to develop digital knowledge, skills and abilities of library staff in order to adapt to the changing needs of users and stay one step ahead in the digital age (Mantilla, 2023).

Ukrainian researchers T. Kolesnykova, O. Horbova, and T. Shcherbatiuk are studying the role of libraries in distance learning and in providing students with open educational resources. The researchers analysed the activities and experience of the scientific library of the Ukrainian State University of Science and Technologies and found that this library is actively laying the foundations for making the provision of educational services at universities dynamic and multidimensional. It is concluded that it is necessary to integrate digital library resources with distance learning platforms to ensure unhindered access for students and teachers (Kolesnykova, 2022). T. Havryliuk (2016) analysed the experience of cooperation between the largest public library in the regional centre of Dnipro with colleagues from the city's university libraries. The scientist noted that the Dnipro Regional Universal Scientific Library has a foreign languages department, where students are offered modern resources for learning foreign languages, including Rosetta Stone self-study software, as well as a film club and a conversation club, to which foreign native speakers are invited (Havryliuk, 2016).

The purpose of this article is to explore the role and place of the Scientific Library of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv as an information centre for learning foreign languages.

Methods

The basis of the methodological approach in this paper is a qualitative comprehensive and systematic combination of theoretical research methods. Thus, the study is based on the works of Ukrainian and foreign researchers published in 2019-2023. The study uses a descriptive method to describe the experience and features of the activities of the Scientific Library of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. Using the methods of abstraction and generalisation, a detailed study and in-depth analysis of the role of the Scientific Library of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv in the process of learning foreign languages by students became possible. In addition, the research methodology is based on the methods of scientific analysis and synthesis, which made it possible to summarise the factual material and draw conclusions. The paper also uses the method of information monitoring to study new forms of library activity and their advantages for learning foreign languages on the example of the Scientific Library of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv.

Results and Discussion

First of all, it should be noted that today there is no end to the interest in learning foreign languages, their status is growing rapidly, and the study of foreign languages is aimed not only at ensuring that the younger generation learns as many languages as possible, but also at developing the skills of students to be informed, mobile and communicative. The state needs highly educated young people with knowledge of foreign languages, professionals ready for international cooperation, for the creation of a new Ukrainian state that will be recognised in Europe and the world. A foreign language becomes a means of intercultural communication. The main goal of teaching a foreign language is to improve the communicative component of students' foreign language competence, to develop their skills and abilities of quality communication and monologue speech.

Currently, the methodology of teaching foreign languages has a wide range of effective teaching methods, including the use of modern digital technologies, which is considered one of

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the most promising and significant. In addition, there is a wide variety of educational resources on the Internet, databases, libraries, etc. that provide access to a large number of learning materials (dictionaries, educational websites, personal learning systems, online courses, etc.). In a time of commercialisation of almost all spheres of life, libraries remain one of the few centres of virtually free access to information and knowledge. It is libraries that respond to the spread of global communications and use new automated technologies to improve the quality of the educational process (Makukha & Andriiash, 2022). All activities of libraries are based on the rich traditions of library and information services, on the introduction of innovations in the field of information support for science and education, and contribute to the achievement of high quality education and research by forming, systematising, preserving the library collection and making it available to students, lecturers, teachers and other users, while trying to use modern information technologies (Rzheuskyi, 2022).

The modern paradigm of library services is based not only on the use of a particular library's collection of documents, but also on the use of fundamentally new opportunities for accessing information regardless of the time and location of both the document and the user. In order to meet the educational, informational, and cultural needs of its users, the library today makes available not only documented knowledge, information stored in its collections or on its hard drives. It goes beyond its physical boundaries, moving from real space to virtual space. On the one hand, it offers access to information resources belonging to other subjects of the information space, including those presented on the Internet, and on the other hand, it creates electronic information resources (collections of digitised documents, databases, websites and web portals) that are located outside its physical walls. In addition, libraries provide virtual services for finding information and knowledge. Electronic library collections, as an alternative to traditional ones, are a requirement of the times, as documents that exist in the library's collections in electronic form have advantages, in particular, greater openness and accessibility for obtaining scientific and educational knowledge. Thus, the modern library becomes a hub information centre that concentrates and distributes information flows (Bezruchko, 2014).

As already mentioned, in the last few years, there has been a growing interest in learning foreign languages in our country, and libraries are not standing aside and trying to attract readers by providing new types of library services that help improve foreign language skills (Havryliuk, 2016). In particular, new types of library services include:

- 1) teaching foreign languages;
- 2) creating the necessary conditions for activating foreign language broadcasting in the library;
- 3) organising various cultural events that increase motivation among different age groups of readers.

Foreign language teaching is usually the most popular activity among library patrons. Libraries engage both professional teachers and people who are fluent in a foreign language, studying at pedagogical universities, etc. for cooperation (Havryliuk, 2016). Foreign language classes are held regularly, according to a specific schedule, and can be either traditional or innovative. These classes are absolutely free, so anyone, regardless of age or financial means, can attend them and thus learn a foreign language.

Creating the necessary conditions for the activation of foreign language in the library involves organising such activities as conversation clubs for readers, conversation groups, trainings, language courses, etc. Organisation of these activities allows library readers to practice their language skills in an informal environment, which contributes to the development of communication skills, motivation to learn foreign languages and reduction of the language barrier. In addition, such classes create a favourable learning environment where everyone can receive

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support not only from teachers but also from other participants in the educational process. In general, language courses, conversation clubs, and foreign language training are very much needed, as knowledge of languages is an important factor in improving educational level, broadening horizons, self-education prospects, creating a comfortable language environment, and overcoming the language barrier.

Cultural events held in libraries are popular, as they deepen knowledge of the traditions of the countries whose languages are studied. The format of events offered by libraries is very diverse: master classes, art exhibitions, film screenings, concerts, literary evenings, wine tastings, meetings with book authors, etc. All of these events are also organised on a volunteer basis. The value of these cultural events for learning a foreign language is that they:

- allow participants to practice speaking in a relaxed atmosphere;
- allow participants to gain direct experience of communicating in a foreign language;
- promote the development of language skills and abilities;
- They help to improve language comprehension and develop the ability to express oneself in a foreign language;
- allow participants to better understand the values, traditions and customs of the country of study;
- promote a positive attitude towards other cultures and increase the level of intercultural understanding;
- make the language learning process interesting and exciting, which helps to increase the motivation of participants;
- create opportunities for new acquaintances and communication with people who share an interest in learning a foreign language and culture, etc.

Thus, holding cultural events in libraries creates unique opportunities to learn about the countries whose language is being studied and helps to develop communication skills in a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere.

In addition, it is worth noting that the trends of the library community aimed at the formation and development of library information networks are relevant today. One of the most important issues is the organisation of the library network space, which unites any automated systems and networks to coordinate efforts and provide free access to users to electronic library products and services. The new influences experienced by libraries have given rise to the idea of digitising libraries and their transition to electronic publications. In this regard, digital libraries are dynamically developing and becoming widespread, and electronic manuals and textbooks in digital libraries are becoming the predominant information content (Zhalko & Liashuk, 2023).

Digital libraries offer a wide range of books in various thematic categories and fields of knowledge, such as literature, science, history, religion, philosophy, foreign languages, etc. In addition, digital libraries can be used as online resources for self-study of a foreign language, where students choose literature on topics of interest. This increases motivation to read and promotes more active involvement of students in the educational process, and the ability to choose books to read independently stimulates self-discipline and develops self-organisation skills of students.

Electronic textbooks are modern learning tools that significantly improve the quality of learning, develop creativity, intuitive and imaginative thinking, and help improve independent skills. E-textbooks include e-books or e-readers, as well as structured and referenced texts and documents of various types, ranging from auxiliary files to web pages containing learning materials. The advantages of an electronic textbook in foreign language learning are as follows:

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- storage of a large amount of information, which makes it possible to work with the training material without interruption;
- multimedia, i.e. the simultaneous use of various forms of information provision and processing, and the possibility of self-control;
- Quickly find the desired section, topic, or dictionary;
- mobility, which will help the student to use their time rationally.

It should be noted that e-textbooks also solve the problem of copies, which has always been a problem for traditional textbooks, as there were not enough of them for everyone. In addition, being self-education-oriented, e-textbooks allow for maximum individualisation of the foreign language learning process and contribute to the development of distance education. The use of multimedia, i.e. sound, text, illustrative and graphic materials, video, etc., has a significant effect in learning a foreign language with such a textbook. E-textbooks present material in a way that increases the efficiency of material perception, the hypertextual organisation of language courses makes it possible to present a large amount of educational information in a compact way and to organise the study of a particular discipline in a rational way, and interactivity features allow you to control the level of knowledge of the learner.

For example, Rosetta Stone is one of the best and most effective software in the world for creating electronic foreign language learning aids. The textbooks based on this software product are successfully used in 150 countries around the world, because the methodology reproduces the natural way of learning a language, similar to the way a child learns his or her mother tongue. The methodology outlined in the e-book stimulates the formation of associative series between words, situations and objects. Dynamic immersion in the language environment helps to think in linguistic units, quickly develops language skills and memorisation of structures that can be used to communicate in a foreign language (Ivanova, Zaiets, & Kononova, 2019).

Electronic dictionaries are no less popular today and not only help in the process of looking up certain words or expressions, but are also able to perform other very useful functions for learners. Electronic dictionaries are equipped with a user-friendly search system and are designed to facilitate the work of professional translators and students. Thus, electronic dictionaries are becoming widely used in the practice of teaching foreign languages to develop and improve the skills, knowledge and abilities of students. Their popularity among learners is quite justified, since "an electronic dictionary reduces search time, has the ability to include an unlimited amount of information, provides simultaneous search not only by the name of a dictionary entry but also across the entire huge volume of dictionaries, which is unrealistic in a paper version, sounds out words and dictionary entries, and is easy to use" (Ivanova, Zaiets, & Kononova, 2019). Electronic dictionaries with voiced texts of dictionary entries help to form the correct pronunciation and intonation, which is important in teaching speaking, because in the conditions of limited foreign language communication with native speakers, it is difficult for learners to achieve error-free and authentic pronunciation. Finally, electronic dictionaries help improve writing skills. Whereas printed dictionaries with alphabetical word order help to find a word whose spelling is known to the user, online dictionaries provide all possible words in case the user knows only the individual letters of the word and chooses the spelling he or she needs. If the learner is unsure of the correct spelling of a word or if the word is too difficult to spell, most dictionary search engines have shortcuts and before the user types in a difficult word, the computer dictionary will suggest a number of words that start with those letters. Thus, one can stop typing and select the desired word from this set (Kyryklytsia, 2020).

The experience of using e-books, textbooks, manuals and dictionaries in digital libraries shows that the effectiveness of their work depends mainly on the availability of user feedback.

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In general, multimedia is a very desirable and effective technology in library and bibliographic services, due to its inherent quality of flexibility, interactivity and integration of various types of multimedia information, as well as the ability to take into account individual characteristics of users and to increase their motivation to search for new information. Multimedia in digital libraries is a promising and highly effective tool that allows to provide masses of information in a larger volume than traditional sources of information and in a sequence that corresponds to the logic of cognition. In addition, the use of modern information technologies in digital libraries can improve students' motivation to learn, their responsibility, level of self-realisation, development of communication skills and intercultural competence (Kuzmenko & Zahumenna, 2021).

Next, we consider it appropriate to consider the role and place of the Scientific Library of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv as an information centre for learning foreign languages. The Scientific Library of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv is one of the largest and oldest scientific libraries in Ukraine. It was founded in 1608 as a book collection of the Lviv Jesuit College. Today, the library's total collection includes more than three million books, 120,000 of which are unique old prints and manuscripts. This scientific library has been a methodological centre of libraries of higher educational institutions of III and IV accreditation levels in the Western region of Ukraine since 1987 according to the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 27 of 20.01.2005. On the basis of the Scientific Library of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, an electronic repository has been created that provides users with easy and open access to all stored types of digital content, including data sets, including images, texts, video files, and catalogues.

The Scientific Library of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv has significant collections of literature in English, German, French, Polish and other languages, including fiction, scientific works, methodological manuals and textbooks that contribute to both theoretical and practical study of languages. The library's collection includes printed and digital dictionaries, multilingual glossaries and grammar books, which are indispensable for linguistic research. In addition, the library organises language clubs, workshops and meetings that promote oral and written language practice. Thanks to the library's information support, students get access to the resources they need to prepare for international exchange programmes such as Erasmus+ and others. To ensure the efficient use of the library's resources, trainings on working with databases, catalogues and search engines are organised, which helps students and teachers to find the necessary sources. The library of the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv also promotes the integration of the university into the international educational space through access to the resources of foreign universities, cooperation with international research organisations and participation in inter-university projects.

In our opinion, at the present stage, libraries are really important information centres that offer students wide opportunities for learning, including learning foreign languages. However, today there are numerous negative factors affecting the development of university libraries as information centres for learning foreign languages, including

- 1) outdated material and technical base;
- 2) Insufficient funding;
- 3) low level of digital literacy of library staff;
- 4) low popularisation of library services;
- 5) lack of specialised areas for language learning, etc.

We believe that in order to increase the effectiveness of foreign language learning in libraries, it is necessary to create all conditions for the activation of foreign language. These conditions include a comprehensive approach, which includes creating a language environment in the library through language courses, classes, language clubs, trainings, etc.; organising interactive events; organising cultural events; using modern technologies to support library professionals, etc. We believe that the application of an integrated approach will turn libraries into powerful centres of language practice and will contribute to the development of students' communicative competence and help them achieve a

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high level of foreign language proficiency. It should be emphasised that library staff should also be informants, managers, specialists in electronic processing of information media and technologists in the automation of library information systems. After all, only a library whose staff are true professionals and are aimed at meeting the needs of its users in full can offer a wide range of services and become a powerful educational centre.

Conclusions

So, we can conclude that libraries today are information, consulting, resource centres, learning platforms, a place for communication and a place where everyone can be helped. As information centres, libraries play a leading role in the process of learning foreign languages, providing a wide range of services, resources and opportunities for self-study and formal learning. Libraries contribute to the development of communication skills, motivation to learn foreign languages and information literacy of students, and therefore their role in the modern education system is indispensable and constantly growing. Modern technologies used in libraries have opened up and will continue to open up new opportunities for users. It has been found that the Scientific Library of the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv is a key centre that provides a wide range of opportunities for learning foreign languages. Its rich resource base, modern technologies and integration into the global information network make it a significant element in the formation of language competences of students and researchers. However, at the current stage, there are a number of negative factors affecting the development of university libraries as information centres for learning foreign languages, including insufficient funding, outdated material and technical facilities, low level of digital literacy of library staff, etc. We are confident that the role of libraries in Ukrainian society will continue to grow and they will serve not only as centres for preserving and providing access to knowledge, but also as language centres, centres of culture, national identity and even ethnic worldview.

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Роль і місце бібліотеки як інформаційного центру у процесі вивчення іноземних мов

Мета. Презентована робота пропонує огляд значення та місця бібліотеки під час вивчення іноземних мов. Мета статті полягає в дослідженні ролі та місця наукової бібліотеки Львівського національного університету імені Івана Франка як інформаційного центру у процесі вивчення іноземних мов. **Методика.** У роботі використано комплекс теоретичних методів дослідження, зокрема: аналіз, синтез, узагальнення, абстрагування, інтерпретація, а також порівняльний, описовий та метод зіставлення. **Результати.** Отримані у процесі наукового дослідження результати, а також сформульовані на їхній основі висновки становлять практичну цінність для викладачів, вчителів та здобувачів освіти, які цікавляться використанням бібліотек для покращення процесу вивчення іноземних мов. **Висновки.** У роботі з'ясовано, що сучасні бібліотеки є

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потужними інформаційними центрами, які створюють комфортне середовище не лише для культурного розвитку здобувачів освіти, але й для їхнього освітнього розвитку, зокрема й під час вивчення іноземних мов.

Keywords: бібліотека; інформаційний ресурс; бібліотечні фонди; електронні ресурси; іноземні мови; іншомовна комунікативна компетентність

Received: 09.08.2024

Accepted: 29.11.2024