INNOVATIVE METHODS IN TEACHING RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract

The landscape of teaching Russian as a foreign language is rapidly evolving due to the integration of innovative pedagogical strategies and digital technologies. This study examines the effectiveness of multimedia tools, communicative language teaching, interactive tasks, and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality in enhancing student engagement and language proficiency. Conducted among university-level learners over one semester, the research compares outcomes between traditional and innovative instructional methods. Findings reveal that students exposed to innovative approaches exhibit significant improvement in speaking and listening skills, heightened motivation, and increased classroom participation. The study highlights the critical need to modernize Russian language instruction to meet the communicative and cultural demands of contemporary learners.

Keywords: Innovative teaching methods, multimedia tools, communicative language teaching, language proficiency, interactive learning, artificial intelligence, virtual reality.

Introduction

In recent decades, the teaching of Russian as a foreign language has experienced profound transformations influenced by technological advancements and shifts in educational paradigms. Traditional language instruction, often reliant on grammar-translation techniques and memorization, no longer suffices to develop communicative competence or intercultural awareness, which are essential in today's globalized context. Consequently, innovative teaching methods emphasizing learner-centeredness, interaction, and the use of digital resources have gained prominence. Additionally, advances in artificial intelligence (AI), mobile learning, and virtual/augmented reality (VR/AR) offer unprecedented

opportunities to create immersive, adaptive, and personalized learning experiences. These methods aim to foster not only linguistic skills but also critical thinking, creativity, and cultural understanding. This study investigates the impact of such innovative methodologies on the effectiveness of Russian language acquisition among foreign learners.

Methods

This study employed a mixed-methods design involving 60 university students enrolled in Russian language courses. Participants were divided equally into an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group engaged with innovative instructional approaches, including multimedia-enhanced lessons, communicative language teaching (CLT) techniques, task-based learning, interactive activities such as role-plays and simulations, as well as the use of AI-powered language learning apps and VR scenarios simulating real-life communication contexts. The control group followed a traditional curriculum focused on grammar rules and repetitive exercises. The study spanned one academic semester (approximately 16 weeks). Both groups attended three 90-minute classes per week. Pre-tests assessing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills were administered at the beginning of the semester. Throughout the semester, classroom observations were conducted to monitor engagement and teaching dynamics. Post-tests identical to the pre-tests were administered at the end of the course to measure proficiency gains.

Additionally, all participants completed motivation and engagement questionnaires at midterm and post-course to gauge affective outcomes. Semi-structured interviews were held with a subset of students from the experimental group to gather qualitative insights into their experiences with the innovative methods.

Data collection methods included pre- and post-course standardized language proficiency assessments, student questionnaires measuring motivation and engagement, and qualitative classroom observations conducted throughout the semester.

Results

The data analysis revealed that students in the experimental group made significantly greater progress in overall language proficiency compared to the

control group. Pre- and post-test comparisons using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) scale showed that 73% of students in the experimental group advanced at least one level (e.g., from A2 to B1), whereas only 40% of the control group achieved similar progress.Notably, speaking and listening skills improved markedly, aligning with the communicative focus of the innovative methods. Survey results indicated higher motivation levels and more positive attitudes toward learning Russian among experimental group students. AI-based learning apps provided immediate feedback and personalized learning paths, which helped students correct errors and build on their strengths more efficiently. The use of gamified exercises and role-playing scenarios further encouraged active participation, especially among learners who had previously shown low levels of engagement in traditional settings.Classroom observations corroborated these findings, revealing enhanced student interaction, collaboration, and active participation. Students highlighted the positive impact of AI-driven personalized feedback and the immersive nature of VR exercises, which helped reduce anxiety and increased confidence in using Russian in authentic situations.

Discussion

The study's findings underscore the effectiveness of innovative teaching methods in advancing Russian language acquisition by fostering a more engaging, interactive, and learner-centered environment. The integration of multimedia resources enriches input quality by providing authentic language materials, diverse contexts, and multisensory learning experiences that aid comprehension and retention. Communicative and task-based approaches promote meaningful language use, encouraging learners to develop practical communication skills and critical thinking. The introduction of AI-powered tools enables personalized learning paths and instant corrective feedback, while VR/AR technologies create immersive environments for experiential learning and intercultural competence development. However, successful adoption of these methods requires comprehensive teacher training, adequate technological infrastructure, and pedagogical adaptation. Future research should explore the long-term effects of AI and VR integration, their scalability in different educational contexts, and their potential to transform Russian language pedagogy.

This research also points to the evolving role of the teacher from a sole knowledge transmitter to a facilitator, designer, and co-learner in the classroom. Teachers' involvement in creating and adapting digital content fosters a more dynamic and responsive learning environment but requires ongoing professional development. Looking ahead, the rapid evolution of AI and immersive technologies offers exciting possibilities for Russian language education, including virtual tutors, speech recognition for pronunciation training, and augmented reality cultural simulations. Longitudinal studies are needed to evaluate the sustained impact of these technologies on language retention and intercultural competence.

Conclusion

In conclusion, innovative methods in teaching Russian as a foreignlanguage present significant advantages over traditional approaches by enhancing learner engagement, language proficiency, and communicative competence. The incorporation of multimedia, communicative teaching, AI, and virtual reality not only enriches the learning environment but also equips students with skills necessary for real-world language use. While challenges such as teacher readiness and resource availability remain, the benefits of these innovative practices strongly advocate for their broader adoption. As technology continues to advance, Russian language education must adapt accordingly, ensuring that teaching methodologies align with the evolving needs and expectations of modern learners.

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