

Innovations in teaching foreign languages to Russian university students

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the problem of innovation in teaching a foreign language in modern Russian universities over the last 10 years. The purpose of the study is to identify innovative methods and technologies of teaching a foreign language to students at Russian universities. The methodological basis of the study is a systems approach. The leading research methods are questioning and analysis. In the course of the study, based on a survey of teachers and students of Plekhanov Russian University of Economics and the analysis of his pedagogical work at the Department of Foreign Languages No.2 of this university revealed a number of features of teaching foreign languages to modern students. A review and analysis of modern domestic and foreign studies on the application and development of various new methods and technologies in teaching foreign languages was also made. Several new methods in teaching a foreign language to students of Russian universities are pointed out. They are brainstorming, storming, networking, co-working, heap-heap, flipped classroom and also the usage of various platforms (Zoom, Webinar). The novelty and practical value of this study lies in the analysis of modern methods of conducting classes in a foreign language and identifying their frequency and effectiveness.

1 Introduction

The article reveals various innovative methods and technologies of teaching foreign languages that have emerged over the last 10 years in Russian universities. Numerous studies by Russian and foreign authors are devoted to this problem. Foreign works [1,2] point out the need for innovative changes in education. One of the most significant factors for great changes is the COVID-19 pandemic, which has contributed to a great transition to distance learning. T. Anderson, J. Dron [3] и C. J. Popovich, R. E. Neel [4] write about it. As a result, there was a need to switch to new forms and methods of teaching, such as using various platforms, conducting classes and video conferencing with their help. M. Pifarre writes about using interactive technologies [5]. Also in modern teaching, it is necessary to take into account the characteristics of the modern generation of students. Generation Z needs to develop communication skills, high creative potential, and critical thinking. This is also a great stimulus for the emergency of new teaching methods and technologies. In addition, the specifics of teaching foreign languages should be taken into account. Warschauer is writing about using computer technologies in teaching foreign languages. He points out three

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stages: behavioral, communicative and integration [6].The study is made to identify and analyse new methods of teaching foreign languages in Russian universities over the last 10 years.

2 Materials and Methods

The methodological basis of the study is a systematic approach. The leading research methods are questionnaires (the questionnaire is shown below in Table 1) and the author’s analysis of the data obtained.

The study was carried out in several stages.

The first stage included the survey of teachers in the Department of Foreign Languages No.2 (45people), which is 30% of the total teaching staff of the language departments of Plekhanov Russian University of Economics in May 2022. The first survey was conducted among undergraduate students of the Higher School of Social Sciences and Humanities and undergraduate and graduate students of the Higher School of Law (118 people). Basically, the satisfaction of students teachers with the main existing educational platform for online learning was surveyed, as well as the preferences of students and teachers for using various educational platforms at Plekhanov Russian University of Economics. The second stage is the analysis of the effectiveness and frequency in using modern methods in teaching a foreign language. Based on his experience in teaching the subject “Foreign Language,” the author in September 2023 analyzed modern methods and technologies of teaching a foreign language to modern students. The results include pictures and diagrams showing the most effective methods, taking into account the specifics of Generation Z.

3 Results

First of all, it should be noted that we need to use various platforms in the classroom in the digital era. In this regard, in May 2022, a survey was conducted among teachers of the Department of Foreign Languages No.2 (45 people) and students of the Higher School of Social Sciences and Humanities and the Higher School of Law at Plekhanov Russian university of Economics (118 people), where they were asked about their preferred platform.

Table 1. Survey data

Questions	Answers	Numbers
1.What platforms do you prefer to use when learning?	Zoom Webinar Moodle	46% 49% 5%
2.Are you satisfied with Webinar as your main platform?	yes no difficult to answer	62% 18% 20%

As can be seen from the survey data, approximately equal preference is given to the Zoom and Webinar platforms. In addition, when asked about satisfaction with the Webinar platform (it is the main one at Plekhanov Russian University of Economics), 62% of respondents gave a positive answer.

If we talk about teaching modern students a foreign language, then first of all it should be noted that we need such new method as multitasking. For example, you need to learn the Simple tenses in English (Present, Past, Future). Considering the clip-like consciousness of generation Z, you can show tables with these tenses, maybe examples of advertising where these tenses are used, etc. In addition, it is necessary to show the algorithm for achieving the goal and task in order to solve it more effectively.

Considering the great creative potential of modern students, it is also necessary to give more creative tasks - presentations, essays on various topics, video competitions on various topics.

It should be noted that there is widespread use of various chatbots and interactive web tools. When presenting material, it is necessary to take into account the need of this generation for gamification - that is, in foreign language lessons you should conduct a variety of business games. I analyzed using of the above technologies in my classes with undergraduate students in foreign languages at Plekhanov Russian University of Economics and the figure below shows the results - gamification (9,1) and multitasking (4,3) turned out to be the most effective and frequently used. Chatbots (3,1) and videos (2,4) turned out to be less effective and less frequently used. The results are shown in Fig. 1.

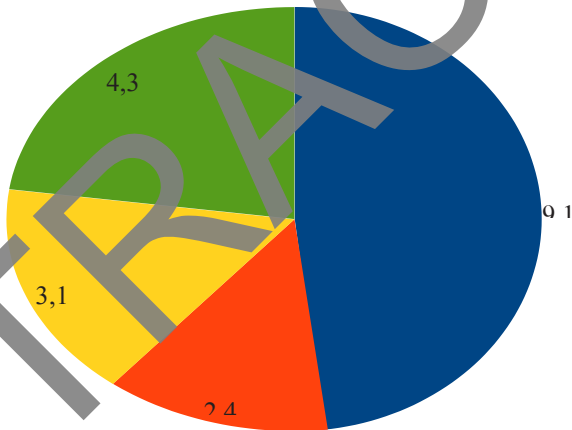


Fig1. The effectiveness and frequency of using modern technologies for teaching a foreign language

Representatives of generation Z are characterized by weak critical thinking (which I have repeatedly noted in class). Therefore, it is necessary to use various exercises when discussing texts to develop critical thinking. It should be noted that an undoubted advantage for teaching the “Foreign Language” discipline is the insufficient development of communication skills among generation Z. For foreign language teachers, a wide field of activity opens up here - they need to be given tasks to be composed and practiced in the class, composing dialogues on the topic of the lesson, conducting various debates, student forums in a foreign language. As extracurricular activities, it should also be noted the need to hold various student online conferences in order to develop communication skills and develop research activities.

Given their high skills in using social networks, you can arrange various surveys and discuss them in class.

Considering the great creative potential of Generation Z students, it is also necessary to give more creative tasks - presentations, essays on various topics, video competitions on various topics.

It should be mentioned that using such new methods of work as networking, brainstorming, coworking, pecha-kucha, and inverted classroom is of special importance.

In my classes, the author of the study used these new techniques in the classroom when teaching a foreign language. Based on my experience of conducting classes at Plekhanov Russian University of Economics found that the effectiveness of these methods differs significantly.

The most effective and frequently used was using brainstorming (9,02). The second one was networking (8,8). Next - coworking (3,2) and flipped classroom (1,5). Below is a corresponding diagram demonstrating the application of these methods in the classroom.

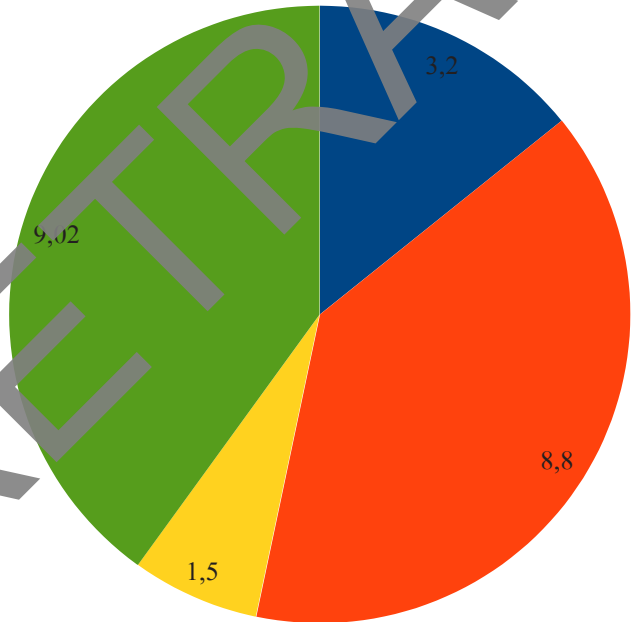


Fig.2 The effectiveness and frequency of using modern methods of teaching a foreign language

4 Discussion

The COVID-19 pandemic forced universities throughout the world community to switch to distance learning and, in this regard, had to master, apply and develop new teaching methods and technologies [7,8,9,10]. Elements of distance education continue to be used in the blended learning format.

Many researchers [11, 12] have repeatedly noted both the pros and cons of distance learning. Along with the development of new methods and technologies (which is undoubtedly a plus and interesting for both teachers and students), distance learning has also created a number of difficulties in learning for both students and teachers [14,15]. Many universities have switched to using special platforms, the choice of which was also difficult [16].

Gamification in teaching foreign languages also should be considered in our discussion [17,18]. It allows you to develop various weak skills in Generation Z students and pointing out their strengths. Multitasking is also new interesting and effective method in teaching foreign languages.

5 Conclusion

The author of the study identified new methods and technologies of teaching digital generation students a foreign language in the last 10 years. Many modern methods of conducting classes, their effectiveness, as well as using various online platforms in foreign language classes were studied. According to the study, various platforms are currently widely used in classes - Zoom, Webinar. Using such new methods as brainstorming, pecha- kucha, networking, coworking, case technologies, blogs of teachers and students, and an inverted classroom will make your classes for students more interesting and effective.

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