

icCSBs 2020**The Annual International Conference on Cognitive - Social and Behavioural Sciences****DEVELOPING METHODOLOGICAL THINKING OF RUSSIAN LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN THE AGE OF DIGITALIZATION**

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Abstract

The article presents the authors' view of the existing common ground between digitalization and language education, the possibilities of forming methodological thinking of the teacher of Russian native language. There are problems caused by the illusion of digital competence of all members of the teaching/learning process. They are also connected with the contradiction between the increasing technologization of education and the lack of consideration of learners' system of values and motivation. The main research questions are as follows: the process of mastering the discipline “Methods of teaching the Russian language” within the framework of a cybernetic model of learning; acquiring the experience of professional activity; the didactic system of training the aspiring teachers of Russian language during their professional adaptation; systematic adjustment of the professional activities of Russian language teachers. The purpose of the study is determined by the need to develop a model of teaching students of the philological faculty, which would be adaptive to digital learning, and the techniques of interpersonal and pedagogical interaction. Among the research methods, the method of interdisciplinary analysis of knowledge systems takes the leading role; observational (the analysis of teaching and learning materials and resources for middle and higher schools) and predictive methods. An intermediate research result is a demonstration that the integration of teachers' fundamental psychological and pedagogical knowledge and practical skills in the digital learning environment is a principal defining factor in the process of developing methodological thinking of the teacher of Russian language.

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Keywords: Digitalization of education; professional activity of Russian language teacher.



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1. Introduction

In view of the digitalization of education, the development of information skills of all members of the teaching-learning process becomes not merely important but absolutely critical. The subject of the study is the selection of information content (Aleksandrova, Vasilevykh, Gosteva, Dobrotina, & Uskova, 2019; Bulman & Fairlie, 2016), the level of teacher's competence in computer technologies (Baturay, Gokcearslan, & Ke, 2017; Digital Competence Framework for Educators, 2019). The paper discusses the kind of teachers' education, which would satisfy the information and education needs of modern students and pupils and would be capable of ensuring the development of their cognitive independence in the information environment (Ivanova, 2016), as well as sets out to define a list of necessary information skills (Aleksandrova, Dobrotina, Gosteva, Uskova, & Vasilevykh 2019; Dobrotina, 2016). In view of this, the training of teachers, who should have new professional thinking and a perfect command of digital technologies, becomes especially relevant.

2. Problem Statement

Digital literacy includes competencies defined as computer literacy, ICT literacy, information literacy and media literacy, as well as communication literacy in various sources. We rely on the approach proposed at the 2017 G20 Summit in April, where the components of digital literacy were singled out: information and computer literacy, media literacy, communication literacy, and technology literacy (Chetty et al., 2017). In the study forecasting the development of the digital economy, the researchers note that digital literacy is not an automatically acquired property of a person born in the digital age. "This is a system of knowledge, skills and attitudes, essential for life in a digital society, their formation and development must be conscious and manageable, and only under this condition can the main goal of digitalization be achieved - improving the quality of people's life" (OECD Digital Economy Outlook, 2017).

There is research on the readiness of Russian teachers to use digital technologies in the teaching-learning process (Aymaletdinov et al., 2019); teachers are encouraged to assess their own digital competence (Tsifrovaya Sistema). The research findings correlate with the data obtained during the work. Observational methods: participant observation, the authors' personal experience of teaching at school and university, in the context of lifelong learning - prove that massive open online courses (MOOCs) are getting more and more recognition in the teaching community. Platforms such as YouTube, Telegram, Instagram that continuously offer online learning services in Russia, including free content, gradually out narrow-focus and single-subject information sites and computer-based learning programs in CD format. Leading universities in the Russian Federation have been creating an information and education environment as a specific set of teaching/learning and reference materials, tools for their development, storage and use, as well as means of interactive web-communication of all members of the teaching-learning process ("Digital Campuses"). Having gained some experience using the Moodle platform, which is focused on collaborative learning technologies, they continue to search for solutions to the organization of education as a cooperative achievement of learning objectives (Narushevich, 2012).

Gradually, resources, which are aimed at accumulating static data and educational information, lose their didactic grounds and are technically transformed. The program of activities has been conducted as part of the priority project “Digital education environment in Russia” for five years. The following platforms have become popular for the training of Russian language teachers: “Lektorium” (a vivid example is the online course “Russian as a Means of Successful Communication”), “Moscow Electronic School”, “Russian Electronic School”. Yandex, a multinational corporation, is developing self-education platforms for Russian teachers, namely intensive courses and webinars “I am a Teacher”, “Yandex.Textbook”; “Learning Analytics at Teacher’s Service”; “The All-Russian Yandex Competition for Teacher’s Day”. Such platforms form a new subject- and information environment, which develops new ways of teacher training and presupposes the development of thinking and activity skills of students that provide for the solving of various issues by known means.

3. Research Questions

The results of a study in which 555 middle school teachers took part allows for an assessment of the extent to which various digital technologies have come into use among school teachers. According to 38% of the teachers, 40% to 100% of their colleagues either use digital technologies poorly or do not use them at all. One fifth (21%) of the teachers have been using digital technologies for at least 5 years. Most educators (91%) are frequent Internet users and have no difficulty using computers and other digital devices (84%). At the same time, teachers are interested in new applications, programs and resources (77%) and actively use social networks (71%) (Aymaletdinov, Baymuratova, Zaytseva, Imayeva, & Spiridonova, 2019, p. 8). The new opportunities that have opened up for the teacher give rise to new risks that have already appeared or start to appear now. For instance, collaborative research carried out by the Economist Intelligence Unit and Microsoft Education warns about the following consequences: first, the reduced practice of creating handwritten texts, i.e. replacing handwriting skills with keyboarding ones; secondly, the progression of the so-called virtual autism, where less and less time is devoted to traditional communication; and finally, the replacement of personal, first-hand experience with virtual impressions and information (OECD Digital Economy Outlook, 2017). The didactic risks connected with the oversaturation of the teaching/learning materials market are also increasing. Lacking self-organization and self-regulation skills, as well as having no intrinsic motivation, consumers are unable to advance beyond the first stage - registering to participate. According to the study by the Harvard and MIT learning platform (edX), the likelihood that a course will be completed is only three percent (Ho et al., 2014). The identified risks redefine the nature of teaching-learning interaction in the training of a Russian language teacher. The authors’ scientific interest lies in finding common ground between the students’ digital competence and their professional teacher training.

The professional life of a teacher has already been transferred to the digital world: an online community of language and literature teachers, the findings of linguistic and methodological research, linguodidactic resources, the quality monitoring of language education. Attempts to discuss the pros and cons of e-learning in the sphere of teacher education lead to a contradictory conclusion. On the one hand, digital technologies discipline the learner and organize the process, making it clear, precise and transparent for achieving the result (poor didactics will stay unchanged even with the use of ICTs - it may

only get worse). On the other hand, they strive to take a leading role in life in general. The technologies move towards taking over the process of education completely, playing the role of a goal in the teaching system. In our view, replacing the traditional teaching and learning process using Russian language methodology with the mere use of online courses is ineffective and unpractical. It is impossible to gain the experience of the activity-based teaching without one's personal experience acquired by learners in a communicative and activity-based environment. The inefficiency of replacing professional disciplines with an online course is accounted for by the fact that the school course of the subject "Russian Language" is, first and foremost, aimed at fulfilling an educational or formative function. Only the unique personality of a teacher maintains an appropriate balance of cultural, ethical and technological aspects in mastering the mother tongue during the supersubject course of the Russian language.

4. Purpose of the Study

The authors of the article set out to develop a model for teaching students of philology that would readily adapt to the digital environment. Our scientific disquisitions are based on the idea generated by the very nature of information interaction (the cybernetic model) - the model of training of the teachers of Russian language is determined by the production and the intake of linguistic and methodological knowledge. In an uncertain and ever-changing reality, it is fundamental knowledge that acquires even greater value. We suggest starting the transformations in the system of teacher education with a new view on the purpose of this training. It is different from the conventional understanding of the teacher's profession connected with the transfer and broadcasting of a certain amount of knowledge and experience. First- and second-year students perceive the teacher of the Russian language as a technologist who transfers basic language and speaking skills. Given the prevailing stereotypes, the needs of the digitalization of education and the risks specified above, we suggest that the aim of preparing a Russian language teacher is to form methodological thinking based on the experience gained from research and experimental activities, including mastering the new communication environment.

5. Research Methods

The following methods were used in conducting the present research: content analysis, the systematization of the findings of pedagogical and methodological studies in order to determine how much is known about the issue; the generalization of authors' experience in creating textbooks and teaching/learning materials; the method of reflection on the scientific and teaching activity.

6. Findings

Since the ability to self-assess and to immerse oneself in reflection activity is a marker of professional competence, we are convinced that the development of methodological thinking begins from the moment students evaluate their thinking and activity skills:

- able / unable to establish linguodidactic ideas;
- able/ unable to define a linguodidactic problem;
- able/ unable to put forward a hypothesis;

able / unable to set a goal and formulate linguodidactic objectives;

able/ unable to choose a method of teaching language and speech.

It is the highest level of goal-setting skills, skills of choosing an individual educational trajectory, the developed skills of independent research activity, the readiness to join in a new type of activity, the ability to change in future professional activities, as well as to predict the line of activity, and by no means the level of one's command of personal computer, that determines the formation of methodological thinking of a modern teacher.

Today in the training of Russian language teachers we take into account new ways of transmitting information and organizing interaction: studying via digital materials: instructions, recommendations, texts, video lectures; the study of text; visualization of linguistic and didactic information, the creation of a digital lesson plan, the making of digital references, comments on language assignments, a detailed assessment, etc. Nevertheless, without one's mastering the basic tools in the sphere of information processing of a text, the internalization of information would fail to occur. The above said makes the problem of developing the skills of information processing of a text extremely relevant. This processing is viewed as a "complex activity, which is both a process of understanding the information presented in the text in various forms, and the result of this understanding, explicitly expressed in the form of secondary texts (thesis, annotation, review, synopsis, abstract, report, speech)" (Dobrotina, 2016, p.15). The lack of pedagogical knowledge arises from the inability to cover specific pedagogic and educational moments during the training, those moments which the young teacher will encounter daily. These tasks are tackled by trial and error first and later intuition and improvisation are added. Hence the development of pedagogical knowledge is finished independently. For the competent presentation of linguistic material, the teacher has to look for new approaches to support individual and differentiated learning. Since each and every situation where the future teacher may encounter difficulties cannot be predicted, it would be reasonable to offer general recommendations for organizing teaching and learning activities. Serikov (2019) repeatedly emphasized that pedagogical knowledge is not a set of algorithms and instructions, and in order to solve pedagogical issues, one must master the basic principles of pedagogical thinking. In teaching activity, there are two important elements: the learning objective and motivation. Successful motivation is attained with the understanding of learners' interests. Here we should point at the favorable position of young teachers who have just graduated from the university: their interests and those of the students coincide or at least quite similar, which helps the teacher find his/her own special approach to children. The skillful formulation of a linguistic learning objective is the result of the teacher's daily creative search. The ability to set the problem should be considered a necessary element of the content of education. How to move from collaborative activity to the autonomous one? In view of the peculiarities of the psychological sense-making of adolescents, character-building activities and situations should be introduced into the teaching-learning process.

The involvement in the activity in the formulation of the linguistic learning objective can be accomplished through the experience that is based on excitement (discussion of a film, quoting from a writer, declamation), the adoption or translation into the learner's language (precedent texts of songs, memes, important news) or through recognition - the result of achieving the goal of character development education (classmates' approval, parents' praise, good marks). These teaching tools are

necessary for teenagers so that they would look at themselves from a different standpoint. We teach how to introduce learning situations into the content of education and how to develop activity skills in laboratory classes in the context of digital communication. Preparing for the class, students neither write the summary of a lesson, nor receive ready-made didactic instructions. Instead, they answer the following questions: what? what for? how? what are the conditions? by what means? how to evaluate? This means that the student receives a certain model, which is given as the subject of pedagogical search. Let us look at the example of the learning situation “Final interview in the Russian language classroom” (see Table 1).

Table 01. The description of the learning situation example “Final interview in the Russian language classroom”

Questions	Methodological Commentary
What?	To teach presentation, expressive reading of the text, answering to questions in detail, dialogue
What for?	To develop the skills of information processing of the text
How?	With tasks on the development of speaking proficiency from the Russian language textbook
What are the conditions?	Processing, interpretation of information in terms of language (speech, communicative actions, language means), dialogue in pairs, group dialogue, dialogue with the teacher, written work
By what means?	Digital content for didactic purposes: podcasts, photographs of a famous person, aesthetically significant motion pictures, short educational and formative videos that are in line with the didactic issues, teacher’s electronic catalogue, information and education environment (“Moscow Electronic School”, “Russian Electronic School”)
How to assess?	Written assignment (review, mini-essay, presentation)

This kind of planning of the learning objective in training of a Russian language teacher caters to the development of thinking and activity skills: to determine linguodidactic ideas and issues, to set a goal, to choose a method of teaching language and speech. Undoubtedly, it is an imitation of a scientific, research inquiry. But only through this stage can we proceed to an actual scientific inquiry. Concentration on the technological side of digitalization obscures the understanding of the ultimate objective of every educational institution. It is the formation of a professionally motivated modern teacher who initiates and organizes a new level of interaction (including digital) that would establish the link between the existing competencies and future challenges and directions in professional activity and which requires the application of fundamental knowledge and skills on any digital platform. It is not occasional advance training that becomes especially relevant, but systemic and continuous self-development, the formulation of research questions in the psychological and pedagogical, as well as linguistic fields of knowledge.

7. Conclusion

The discussion of the issue in question shows that the core of the model of training a Russian language teacher in the digital environment is the fundamental psychological and pedagogical knowledge that is required for solving specific research tasks. The formation of methodological thinking of a teacher

of Russian language takes place within the subject- and information teaching/learning environment in the search for a solution to linguodidactic problems. Integration of teachers' fundamental psychological and pedagogical knowledge and practical skills in the digital learning environment is a principal defining factor. Currently, professional training of students of Moscow Region State University is carried out as part of the research (task) system for the training of Russian language teachers (Gats, 2018). Future research should be focused on the creation of a program for the development of linguodidactic skills of a philologist in a digital learning environment.

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