# IFTE 2017
# III International Forum on Teacher Education

## MODERN TECHNIQUES OF TEACHING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN WITH MIGRANT BACKGROUNDS

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### Abstract

Educational institutions take the leading place in psychological, pedagogical, sociocultural, and language adaptation of children with migrational backgrounds. The success of teaching mainly depends on the teacher. For effective work with children with migrational backgrounds, a teacher should have multicultural competences which are expressed in personal qualities and professional skills. An important component of teachers' multicultural attributes is the understanding of forms, approaches, and working methods in a multicultural class - in other words technologies of teaching and assisting pupils. The research objective is to systematize the technologies of teaching described in foreign and Russian scientific literature, to reveal the techniques of teaching children with migrational backgrounds applied in teaching practice. We used questionnaires with open questions in this study. The feedback from respondents were subjected to content analysis. Casual selection from sixty-three elementary school teachers were used in this research. Russian elementary school teachers working with children with migrational backgrounds were mostly considered in this study and we used ethnocultural, group, interactive, game technologies, technologies of individualization of teaching processes, and technologies of differentiated teaching. 21% of the interviewed teachers gave additional Russian lessons for children with migrational backgrounds, but did not use the technique of teaching Russian as foreign language. Also, several limitations in application of questioning methods in this research have come to light. These limitations have been related to the impossibility of obtaining specified, straightforward, and concretized answers from the respondents.

## 1. Introduction

Modern society is characterized by the increase of population mobility. The Russian Federation likewise has been visited with the influx of immigrants. In the last decades, the number of displaced persons constantly grew in Russia. By estimates in the report of the UN, the Russian Federation takes the second place in the world by number of immigrants. At the beginning of 2016, there were about 9,9 million foreign citizens in the territory of the Russian Federation. 90% of all immigrants were occupied by Uzbeks (2 million people), Ukrainians (2 million people), Tajiks (1 million people.). In January-September of 2016 about 29 thousand immigrants settled in the Republic of Tatarstan. In our country and in particular in the Republic, labor migration prevails. Quite a number of the displaced persons are made up by children of school age.

The right to education is granted to children of foreign citizens according to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, on the Law of rights of foreign citizens in the Russian Federation. The Law on education has been effected since September 1, 2013 and it is found on several international documents – the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the declaration on "Education for All",etc. For any educational organization – kindergarten, primary and secondary schools, or vocational education institution we often meet children who are heterophonic (that is not knowing or poorly knowing Russian), who were raised in other social and cultural conditions, this brings about certain difficulties.

But at the same time, educational institutions take the leading place in psychological, pedagogical, sociocultural, and language adaptation of children with migrational backgrounds. Migrant children are children with special educational needs. They need well-timed help, support and assistance.

The modern ideas of supporting and protecting the identity of children with migrational backgrounds are reflected in works of many psychologists and teachers. Understanding of adaptation of children with migrational backgrounds in education goes hand in hand with multicultural education (Berry, 1997; Banks, 2004), cultural dialogues (Bibler, 1989), the concept of culture education in international communication (Gasanov, 1996, Biktagirova & Kasimova, 2017), and in migratory pedagogics (Bondarevskaya & Gukalenko, 2000).

In Russian pedagogical and psychological science, the concept "technique" is traditionally used in reference to teaching and education methods. This aspect is understood as "a special set of forms, methods, ways of teaching and educational means, and as the procedure of stage-by-stage work directed to achieving educational purposes" (Selevko, 2005). Techniques of assisting children with migrational backgrounds are sets of forms, methods, ways, means, and stage-by-stage work for successful teaching and development (Surovtseva, 2016; Mokhova and Spirin, 2014). In the works of foreign scientists, the word 'technique' is understood as "ways, methods of training", the terms "educational strategies", "teaching strategies" "technics" are more often used (Levine, 2013; Garmon, 2004; Gay, 2005).

Studying domestic and foreign literature, we have understood that there are contradictions in the use of the terms "technologies", "techniques", "ways", "methods" etc, but in Russian science, it is possible to see different approaches in defining these concepts. Sometimes the same phenomena, for example - teaching, is called technology, and in another case – method. But all these concepts are united by one thing. They answer a question: "how to work, how to train this or that category of children". Despite the

terminological differences and contradictions, comparison of domestic and foreign researches has shown that many techniques are substantially similar. They pursue the same aims. Further we have tried to generalize the technologies applied in teaching children with migrational backgrounds.

Technologies in the Russian and foreign researches, with references to some authors who studied the use of these technologies for teaching, and for the psychological and pedagogical assistance of children with migrational backgrounds are presented in table 1.

**Table 01.** Technologies of teaching and assistance of children with migrational backgrounds

| Russian variant | Features of application | Foreign variant |
|---|---|---|
| Technologies of teaching language as Foreigners. (Zheleznyakova, and others, 2011) | Teaching a second (third) language | Process of learning English as a new language (Herrell and others, 2016; de Oliveira, 2016; Levine and others, 2013) |
| Ethno-cultural technologies (Lebedeva, 2002; Zborovsky, 2013) | Assimilation of knowledge about various cultures and cultural processes and formation of the tolerant relations | (García and others, 2016; Banks, 1994; Dragonas, 2005) |
| Technology of individualization of teaching (Goryachev and others 2008): | Adaptation of contents, methods and ratings of educational activity of the child to his abilities; allowing for the monitoring of progress from ignorance to knowledge | Provision of mentoring (Heckmann, 2008) |
| Group technologies (Zinovyeva and others 2016) | Community Building Strategies are introduced by the teacher to help develop a sense of community within the classroom and within small groups of students. (Allows to develop the interpersonal relations in a class and small groups) | Community Building Strategies (Levine and others, 2013). Cooperative learning Kagan (1994) |
| Interactive technologies (communicative) (Passov, 2000) | Interactive Strategies are organized by the teacher to promote oral language development in the classroom. (These strategies allow to develop communicative skills and personal qualities, such as confidence, an adequate self-assessment). | Interactive strategies in teaching. (Levine and others, 2013; Lääkkölä et al., 2014) |
| The differentiated teaching (Markina, 2010) | Creation of special classes for children with migrational backgrounds | The grouping (Crul, & Schneider, 2009; Heckman, 2008) |
| Game technologies (Tregubova, 2014) | Use of developmental and emotional game potentials for training and education. | Games (Bulotsky-Shearer et al., 2016) |
| Information and communicative technologies (Omelchenko, 2015) | Use of the computer, electronic media and electronic educational resources | Computer-assisted learning (Lai and others, 2015) |

The success of teaching and assisting children with migrational backgrounds in educational institutions mainly depends on the teacher, only if he is able to work with children with migrational backgrounds. In other words – based on the multicultural competences of the teacher. An important component of the teacher's multicultural skill, is a grasp of forms, approaches, and working methods in a multicultural class, in other words technologies of teaching and assisting pupils (Dzhalalova, 2009; Alismail, 2016; Agirdag, 2016).

## 2. Problem Statement

Despite the importance of the question on the teacher's ability to train children with migrational backgrounds, or what methods they use for this purpose, there are quite a few researches in this direction. There is a need to interview teachers on their usage of strategies, techniques, and technologies of teaching and assistance. (Alismail, 2016).

In this work, we try to systematize technologies of teaching used by Russian teachers. This research is directed to identify techniques of teaching, psychological aid, and pedagogical assistance of children with migrational backgrounds in Russian schools.

## 3. Research Questions

1. What techniques of teaching and psychological and pedagogical assistance of children with migrational backgrounds are described in domestic and foreign literature?

2. What types of technologies are considered necessary to use by Russian teachers?

3. Are there distinctions between categories, which teachers consider necessary to use, and that, which they have applied?

## 4. Purpose of the Study

Research objective is to reveal the techniques of teaching and psychological and pedagogical assistance of children with migrational backgrounds in teaching practice.

Research problems:

1. To review theoretically, the systematization of technologies of teaching and psychological and pedagogical assistance of children with migrational backgrounds described in domestic and foreign literature.

2. To design and carry out the questionnaire with open questions to identify the technologies of teaching and psychological and pedagogical assistance of children with migrational backgrounds used by the Russian teachers.

3. To subject the data of the study to content analysis.

4. To reveal distinctions in the categories specified by teachers as applied and necessary.

## 5. Research Methods

For studying the technologies of teaching and psychological and pedagogical assistance of children with migrational backgrounds applied in teaching practice, we designed a questionnaire with open questions. The questions assumed answers in free format. At the beginning of the questionnaire, it

was necessary to specify the existence or absence of children with migrational backgrounds at the school, and experience of work with children with migrational backgrounds. We asked teachers the technologies (ways, techniques, methods) that could be used for effectively working with children with migrational backgrounds.

Moreover, we separately asked about what they consider expedient to apply and what they actually apply. Also questions about methods of individual and frontal work with classes where the migrant child studies have been divided.

Furthermore, data of the questionnaire were subjected to content analysis. Previously, we had made a classification scheme to which we added main categories based on theoretical analysis. The main technologies, strategy, forms and methods of teaching migrants described in scientific literature served as the categories. We considered these categories above. They were brought in a quoted matrix (see table 2.). The expert encoder noted the presence or lack of this category for each respondent. If other categories were met, they fitted into the line "other". The respondents were asked to not only name the technique, but also name the component of technology (that is content, methods, techniques and forms of work). For example, if the respondent doesn't tick on "ethnocultural technology", but notes "celebrating national holidays", "studying traditions of the country of the child's home country", we consider it as "ethnocultural technology".

**Table 02.** Matrix for encoding

| Categories | Respondent 1 | Respondent 2 | Respondent 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Technologies of teaching language as nonnative | | | |
| Ethnocultural technologies | | | |
| Technology of individualization of teaching | | | |
| Group technologies | | | |
| Interactive technologies (communicative) | | | |
| The differentiated teaching | | | |
| Gam technologies | | | |
| Information and communicative technologies | | | |
| Other | | | |

Finally, the frequency of occurrence of this category was counted, and then we carried out comparisons of categories, which they used, and categories they considered necessary to be used.

## 6. Findings

We interviewed 63 elementary school teachers. The selection was casually carried out on teachers who presented themselves for advanced training courses. We investigated them in three cities - Kazan, Bugulma, and Moscow. The selection included teachers working at city and rural schools.

Among the interviewed teachers, 14 teachers had no experience working with children with migrational backgrounds, but showed interest in taking part in the questionnaire. Also, 4 questionnaires didn't contain any data on applied technologies. We did not subject these questionnaires to the analysis.

Thus, answers from 45 teachers having experience of work with children with migrational backgrounds were selected for content analysis. The teacher of the discipline "Pedagogical technologies" acted as the expert encoder.

At first, we compared the frequency of occurrence in respondents' answers in those categories, which they considered as necessary to apply and those which they specified as used by them. For detection of statistical distinctions, we used the multipurpose criterion of Fischer (Ostapenko, 2010). It allowed to calculate the statistical reliability of differences in the data submitted in percentage shares. The use of Fischer's criterion did not reveal statistically reliable differences. So, it was deduced that teachers specified the same technologies as applied, as necessary.

Results of the content analysis of all categories are presented in the third table. The used categories are presented in decreasing order: in a percentage ratio from the most common to the least common. The categories, which become known after the analysis of teachers' questionnaires, are included into the second part of the table. It is impossible to call categories, which are presented in the second part of the table- except for "problem teaching"- as technologies. Teachers also noted means (technical means), studying methods (tests, questionnaires), general principles (to work as with the others), and experts to whom they would recommend directing the child (the speech-language therapist, the psychologist). Most likely, it is possible to call them structural components of technologies. Structural elements of educational technologies contain: teaching purposes, content of teaching, means of pedagogical interaction, organization of educational process, methods and forms of educational activity of pupils, material digestion process management activity of the teacher, and diagnostics of educational process (Selevko, 2005).

**Table 03.** Frequency of Categories (in %)

| I Categories | Frequency |
|---|---|
| Ethnocultural technologies | 45 |
| Technology of individualization of teaching | 29 |
| Group technologies | 24 |
| Interactive technologies (communicative) | 24 |
| The differentiated teaching | 18 |
| Game technologies | 6 |
| Information and communicative technologies | 2 |
| Technologies of teaching language as nonnative | - |
| **II Categories included after analyzing the questionnaires** | **Частота** |
| Conversations | 37 |
| Additional Russian lessons | 21 |
| To work with the others | 10 |
| Tests, questionnaires | 8 |
| Speech-language therapist, the psychologist | 8 |
| Drawing | 4 |

| Technical means | 4 |
|---|---|
| Working with parents | 2 |
| Problem teaching | 2 |
| Programs for disabled children | 2 |

Apparently from the table, the category "ethnocultural technologies" has the highest frequency. This technology can be seen in answers of respondents through such statements as "to study traditions of the child's country", "out-of-class events, "friendship with people", "carrying out national holidays", "the child telling other pupils about his/her country", "tolerance lessons", etc. In Russian schools, at the initial stage of the general education, ethnocultural contents are included in textbooks on international studies and literary reading. Extra-curricular events, involving holidays, festivals devoted to history and traditions of children from foreign countries are quite often marked in educational institutions.

The category - "conversations" is on the second place on frequency. We couldn't refer this category to any technology, because it is a component of many technologies depending on contents and purposes of conversation.

"The technology of individualization of teaching" is a category of rather frequent occurrence. Teachers, in their answers, spoke about the necessity of individual lessons, usage of cards where the step-by-step algorithm of task performance is described, and usage of more facilitated tasks for children. However, several teachers in the questionnaires wrote only "cards-assistants", without explaining what they meant. Also in the answers we met feedbacks such as; "further explanation", "individual tasks" - which portrayed the usage of "individualization of teaching".

Group and interactive (communicative) technologies had an identical frequency (24%). When determining "interactive technologies" the teachers gave responses such as; "trainings", "conversations with the pupil", "conversations on topics interesting to the child", "discussions", "mail correspondence with the teacher". Group technologies were described by respondents with the concepts; "group work", "work in groups", "work in couples", "place with the smart pupil" "cooperative teaching", "trainings for unity". Both technologies are very similar. Using these technologies allow teachers to intensify communicative processes in a class, help children to join group of peers and safely build communicative process.

21% of the teachers mentioned "additional Russian lessons". Sometimes this category is formulated as "individual Russian lessons", so teachers can understand the necessity of additional lessons in carrying out language adaptation of children with migrational backgrounds. But no teacher ticked the technology of teaching Russian as a foreign language. Teachers were not aware of the usage of teaching technologies for heterophonic children as pertinent for teaching children-immigrants.

The next category on frequency is "game technologies". Teachers mentioned "game methods", "joint games", "sports" in the answers. Game methods are universal for all age of pupils. Also during games the child often has no language barrier.

Some of the teachers (10%) suggested working differently with children of migrational backgrounds, (not working with them as with other pupils). Once again, we want to pay attention to fact,

that use of questionnaire didn't allow to specify, how possible this was. What category of pupils did they mean: with knowledge or without knowledge of the teaching language?

8% of the teachers noted on the need of psychological help and speech-language therapist for children with migrational backgrounds. But the nature of the help wasn't specified. It is not clear what problem these experts will help to solve. Also, the purpose of using questionnaires and tests wasn't expedient.

At the same time 6% of the teachers noted that creation of separate classes is necessary for children with migrational backgrounds. Other teachers didn't speak about this aspect of teaching children with migrational backgrounds. Proceeding from this, we can question the need of separating children with migrational backgrounds from usual classes. This question however, demands additional studying.

Also, detection contents from the categories "drawings" and "technical means of teaching" was problematic. 4% of the teachers responded to it. Specifying exactly how to apply "drawings" and "technical means of teaching" was impossible.

"Work with parents", "problem teaching ", "the program for disabled children" were the rarest answers of respondents. 2% of the teachers responded to these questions. A number of researches point out the effectiveness and necessity of working with parents of children with migrational backgrounds (Birman et al., 2007; Nusche, 2009; García et al., 2016; Andrianova, 2014). The possibility of using problem teaching for the education of children with migrational backgrounds raises doubts, especially in relation to those children who poorly understand the teaching language. To understand the problem statement of materials and self-dependently search knowledge the use of programs for disabled children, probably, is expedient at the initial stages of entrance of children with migrational backgrounds into educational institutions. Because of poor level of language assimilation, the level of requirements to them has to be reduced, tasks have to be facilitated. Additional psychological and pedagogical help is necessary.

## 7. Conclusion

Thus, the research has allowed to draw the following conclusions.

1. From the responses of teachers, the same technologies act as applied, and as necessary.

2. For working with children from migrational backgrounds, the Russian teachers consider the following technologies as the most acceptable: ethnocultural, group, interactive, game technologies, technologies of individualization of teaching, the differentiated teaching.

2. Several teachers (21%) advised giving additional Russian lessons for children with migrational backgrounds. However, they aren't informed that for teaching of children-migrants, it is possible to use special technologies of teaching Russian as a foreign language.

3. Also many limitations in applying a method of questioning for this research was revealed. Firstly, there was no opportunity to specify answers. It wasn't always clear what exactly the teachers meant in their answers. Secondly, it was difficult to refer answers to this or that category, as one and the same answer without specification can be referred to different techniques. Thirdly, by means of questionnaire, it is difficult to judge if teachers really use these technologies or only know about them and declare that they use them. That is why at the next investigation phase, an interview of teachers will be

used to determine the level of competence in the usage of educational techniques in the course of teaching children with migrational backgrounds.

## Acknowledgements

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