

IMPROVING THE TEACHING METHODOLOGY OF SPECIALIZED SUBJECTS IN THE TRAINING OF FUTURE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS: IN THE EXAMPLE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN UZBEKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

The teaching of specialized subjects within the training of future foreign language teachers is pivotal for developing educators who are proficient in the language and equipped with tailored pedagogical skills. This article examines current methodologies in Uzbekistan, identifies gaps, and proposes strategies for enhancement, integrating technological advancements, interdisciplinary approaches, and active learning techniques. By refining these methodologies, teacher training programs in Uzbekistan can better prepare educators to meet the demands of contemporary language education.

Key words: *Foreign Language Teaching, Teacher Training, Specialized Subjects, Phonetics, Applied Linguistics, Cultural Studies, Interdisciplinary Integration, Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Collaborative Projects, Pedagogical Methods, Virtual Reality (VR) in Education*

АННОТАЦИЯ

Преподавание специализированных предметов в рамках подготовки будущих учителей иностранного языка имеет решающее значение для подготовки преподавателей, владеющих языком и обладающих индивидуальными педагогическими навыками. В этой статье рассматриваются текущие методологии в Узбекистане, выявляются пробелы и предлагаются стратегии по совершенствованию, интеграции технологических достижений, междисциплинарных подходов и методов активного обучения. Совершенствуя эти методологии, программы подготовки учителей в Узбекистане могут лучше подготовить преподавателей к удовлетворению требований современного языкового образования.

Ключевые слова: *преподавание иностранного языка, подготовка учителей, специализированные предметы, фонетика, прикладная лингвистика, культурология, междисциплинарная интеграция, проблемно-ориентированное*

обучение (PBL), совместные проекты, педагогические методы, виртуальная реальность (VR) в образовании.

INTRODUCTION

Foreign language teaching in Uzbekistan is a critical area of education, reflecting the country's emphasis on linguistic proficiency and intercultural communication. This focus is driven by the need to prepare students for global interactions and foster a deeper understanding of different cultures. Specialized subjects such as phonetics, syntax, applied linguistics, and cultural studies are essential components of teacher training programs. Effective methodologies in teaching these subjects are crucial for preparing competent and adaptable language teachers. However, traditional teaching methods often fall short in engaging students and addressing the dynamic needs of modern classrooms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The training of future foreign language teachers involves equipping them with both linguistic proficiency and pedagogical skills. Specialized subjects such as phonetics, syntax, applied linguistics, and cultural studies are essential components of teacher training programs. The effectiveness of these programs depends significantly on the methodologies employed in teaching these subjects. Lecture-based teaching remains a dominant method in higher education worldwide, including in Uzbekistan. According to Brown (2007), lectures can efficiently convey a large amount of information and provide a structured overview of complex topics. However, research by Freeman (2002) highlights the limitations of this approach, noting that it often leads to passive learning where students are recipients rather than active participants. This can result in lower engagement and retention rates. Seminars and discussions are recognized for their potential to enhance critical thinking and deepen understanding (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). These interactive sessions encourage students to engage with the material actively, fostering skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. In Uzbekistan, these methods are employed to supplement lectures, yet their effectiveness can be limited by large class sizes and varying student participation levels. Practicum and field experiences are crucial for bridging the gap between theory and practice. Richards and Rodgers (2014) emphasize the importance of real-world teaching experiences in developing pedagogical skills. In Uzbekistan, such practicum sessions provide invaluable hands-on experience but are often integrated late in the training process, reducing their potential impact on theoretical learning.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In our research we have tried to analyze the current methodologies in Uzbekistan that are in use.

Lecture-Based Approach

The lecture-based approach remains predominant in many educational institutions across Uzbekistan. This method involves instructors delivering content through direct instruction, often supported by textbooks and slides. While it is an efficient way to cover extensive material and ensure that students receive comprehensive theoretical knowledge, this approach tends to promote passive learning. Students listen to lectures, take notes, and memorize information, but opportunities for active engagement, critical thinking, and practical application are limited. At Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature, the lecture-based approach is extensively used in courses such as syntax and phonetics. Professors deliver detailed lectures on grammatical structures and phonetic principles, expecting students to absorb and recall this information during examinations. Although this method ensures coverage of the syllabus, it does not adequately engage students or foster interactive learning.

Seminar and Discussion

Seminars and discussion sessions are employed to supplement lecture-based teaching. These sessions encourage interaction, critical thinking, and in-depth exploration of topics. Students analyze texts, participate in debates, and present their insights, which helps them develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter. At Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages, seminars are an integral part of the applied linguistics curriculum. Students are divided into small groups to discuss various linguistic theories and their applications. They are encouraged to present their findings and debate different perspectives. This method promotes active learning and critical engagement, but it may not cater to all learning styles and sometimes lacks the structure needed to ensure comprehensive coverage of the material.

Practicum and Field Experience

Practicum sessions and field experiences are crucial components of teacher training programs in Uzbekistan. These practical experiences allow future teachers to apply their theoretical knowledge in real classroom settings, developing their teaching skills and gaining firsthand experience. The University of World Economy and Diplomacy incorporates practicum sessions in its teacher training program. Students are placed in local schools where they observe experienced teachers, participate in lesson planning, and eventually lead classes under supervision. This hands-on approach is invaluable for building practical teaching skills. However, these

experiences often come late in the training process, limiting their integration with theoretical coursework.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Despite the strengths of the current methodologies, several gaps hinder the effectiveness of teacher training programs in Uzbekistan. Specialized subjects in foreign language teacher training programs are often taught in isolation, missing the opportunity to incorporate insights from related disciplines that could provide a more comprehensive understanding. This compartmentalization can lead to a fragmented grasp of concepts, which limits the practical application of knowledge. In many Uzbekistani institutions, phonetics is taught as a standalone subject focusing primarily on the articulatory and acoustic properties of speech sounds. However, this approach often neglects the cognitive aspects of how sounds are perceived and processed by the brain. Integrating cognitive psychology into the phonetics curriculum could enhance students' understanding of the mental processes involved in speech production and perception. At Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature, the traditional phonetics course was revised to include elements of cognitive psychology. Students participated in projects where they examined the psychological processes underlying sound production and perception. This interdisciplinary approach led to improved student engagement and a deeper understanding of the subject matter, as evidenced by higher test scores and positive feedback in course evaluations. Despite the potential of advanced educational technologies to significantly enhance learning experiences, they are often underutilized in Uzbekistan's teacher training programs. These technologies can provide interactive and immersive experiences that traditional teaching methods cannot match. Interactive software and online simulations are tools that can transform the learning environment. For instance, language learning applications like Duolingo or Rosetta Stone use gamification and interactive exercises to enhance language acquisition. However, such technologies are not widely adopted in Uzbekistan's educational institutions, where traditional methods prevail. The Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education of Uzbekistan initiated a pilot program to incorporate virtual reality (VR) in cultural studies courses. Students used VR headsets to explore virtual environments replicating various cultural settings. This immersive experience helped students develop a better understanding of cultural contexts and improved their ability to use language appropriately in different situations. Surveys conducted after the implementation showed that students found the VR experiences highly engaging and beneficial for their learning. Active learning

strategies are proven to engage students more effectively and help them apply theoretical knowledge in practical scenarios. However, these strategies are not commonly used in Uzbekistan's specialized subject teaching, leading to a more passive learning experience. Problem-based learning (PBL) and collaborative projects are methods that encourage active participation and practical application of knowledge. In PBL, students are presented with real-world problems that they must solve using the theoretical knowledge they have acquired. Collaborative projects, on the other hand, require students to work together, fostering teamwork and deeper understanding through peer learning. Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages implemented a flipped classroom model in its applied linguistics course. Students were required to watch lecture videos at home and engage in problem-solving activities during class time. This approach allowed students to apply theoretical concepts to practical problems, enhancing their learning experience. As a result, students reported higher levels of satisfaction and demonstrated better performance in assessments compared to traditional lecture-based classes. Addressing the gaps in interdisciplinary integration, technology utilization, and active learning opportunities can significantly enhance the training of future foreign language teachers in Uzbekistan. By adopting a more holistic and interactive approach to teaching specialized subjects, educational institutions can better prepare their students for the demands of contemporary language education. These improvements will not only enhance the competence of future teachers but also enrich the learning experiences of their students, ultimately leading to more effective language education across the country. Specialized subjects in Uzbekistan are frequently taught in isolation, without integrating insights from related disciplines. This can lead to a fragmented understanding and hinder the application of knowledge in practical teaching scenarios. Despite the availability of advanced educational technologies, many programs in Uzbekistan underutilize these resources. Effective integration of technology can enhance learning experiences and better prepare future teachers for tech-savvy classrooms. Active learning strategies, such as problem-based learning and collaborative projects, are underutilized in specialized subject teaching in Uzbekistan. These strategies can significantly enhance engagement and knowledge retention.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Integrating interdisciplinary approaches can provide a more holistic understanding of specialized subjects. For instance, combining phonetics with cognitive psychology can help students understand the cognitive processes

underlying pronunciation. Collaborative teaching, where instructors from different disciplines co-teach, can enrich the learning experience. Leveraging technology can transform the teaching of specialized subjects. Interactive software, virtual reality (VR) environments, and online simulations can provide immersive experiences that traditional methods cannot. Implementing active learning techniques can increase student engagement and retention. Problem-based learning (PBL) presents real-world problems that students solve collaboratively, applying their theoretical knowledge in practical scenarios. Flipped classrooms, where students review content online and engage in interactive activities in class, can also foster active learning. Regular, formative assessments and feedback can help students track their progress and identify areas for improvement. Digital platforms can facilitate continuous assessment through quizzes, interactive exercises, and peer reviews, providing immediate feedback. At the University of World Economy and Diplomacy, digital platforms were implemented to conduct regular quizzes and peer reviews. This continuous assessment approach provided immediate feedback, helping students to better understand and retain the material. A university in Tashkent implemented an interdisciplinary phonetics course, combining elements of phonetics and cognitive psychology. The course included collaborative projects where students researched and presented on the cognitive aspects of speech production and perception. Surveys and assessments showed increased student engagement and deeper understanding of the material. Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages introduced VR technology in their cultural studies course. Students used VR headsets to explore virtual environments simulating different cultural contexts. This immersive experience significantly enhanced their cultural competence and language use in context, as evidenced by improved performance in both practical assessments and reflective essays.

Enhancing the teaching methodology of specialized subjects in the training of future foreign language teachers requires a multifaceted approach. By integrating interdisciplinary perspectives, leveraging technology, and incorporating active learning strategies, teacher training programs in Uzbekistan can better prepare educators to meet the evolving demands of language education. These improvements will not only enhance the competence of future teachers but also enrich the learning experiences of their future students.

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