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Interactive Teaching Methods in Russian Language Lessons

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Abstract: The article discusses one of the approaches to modernizing education based on competencies, namely through the use of interactive forms of learning. Mastery of interactive learning technology contributes to the development of qualities in students that meet the requirements outlined in the new generation of state educational standards.

Keywords: Interactive teaching methods, dialogic communication, teaching methods, innovative forms of learning.

Introduction: Modern society and a new outlook on life place special demands on the school. Today, the primary goal of education is not only for the student to accumulate a certain amount of knowledge, skills, and abilities, but also to prepare the student as an independent subject of the educational process. At the core of modern education lies the student's active involvement, guided by the teacher.

Interactive ("Inter" meaning mutual, and "act" meaning to act) implies interaction, being in a mode of conversation or dialogue with someone. In other words, unlike active methods, interactive methods are aimed at broader interaction not only between students and the teacher, but also among the students themselves, with an emphasis on student-driven activity during the learning process. The core components of interactive methods are the exercises and tasks performed by students. A key distinction from traditional tasks is that, when completing them, students are not just reinforcing previously learned material, but are actively learning new content. In the process of interactive learning, the student becomes an active participant in the educational process, as the assimilation of material

occurs not through direct transmission, but through the learner's own activity—learning happens through co-participation and interaction.

Interactive learning is discovery-oriented learning: students acquire new knowledge through practical experience, gaining skills in analysis and problem-solving. Interactive learning fosters a stable and positive motivation in students toward studying academic subjects. It cultivates cognitive activity and a desire to learn not only the material included in the textbook, but also to go beyond it—to study because it is interesting, because there is curiosity in finding solutions to challenging, problem-based tasks.

The active integration of elements of interactive teaching methodology involves working in pairs, as well as in small and large groups. Implementing interactive teaching methods requires the teacher to reconsider many familiar approaches. For example, allowing students to communicate freely with one another in class may seem simple at first. However, without mutual respect, the ability to listen to one another, and proper overall guidance in conducting the lesson, such an approach will not be successful.

Based on the interactive method, the role of the teacher changes fundamentally: they are not only a bearer of knowledge but also a guide and initiator of students' independent creative work. The interactive method of teaching is inherently innovative. The term "interactive methods" (from the English "interactive," where "inter" means "between" and "active" comes from "act," meaning to act or action) can be translated as methods of interaction between participants. Instruction carried out through these methods can thus be considered interactive—that is, built on mutual engagement and collaboration.

The principle of interactive learning lies in the fact that the educational process takes place under conditions of constant, active interaction. The teacher and students engage with each other, and students collaborate by teaching one another. Clear, well-defined goals are set for the lesson, and all activities are structured around continuous feedback. This approach enhances motivation for language learning, promotes personal development, fosters students' creative abilities, and strengthens their capacity to think and speak in Russian.

The main forms of interactive learning include: role-playing communication games, speech situations, discussion-based games, interactive team games, the case study method, the "POPS formula," project-based learning, brainstorming, virtual journeys, contests, performances, fairy tales, presentations, debates, discussions, mind mapping, video viewing, and audio

listening, among others. Let us take a closer look at some of these methods.

Role-playing is one of the most common interactive teaching methods. In Russian as a Foreign Language (RFL) classes at the beginner level, everyday life situations are acted out. The plots of role-playing games can be based on simple scenarios such as going to a store, library, café, theater, hair salon, post office, or meeting someone for the first time. For example, a role-play called "At the Store" (a dialogue with a shop assistant) can be organized, where one student plays the role of the shop assistant and another the customer. Other scenarios include "At the Restaurant" (visitor and waiter), "At the Bank," "At the Airport (buying tickets)," "At the Hotel Reception Desk," and so on.

For students with advanced proficiency in Russian, more complex interactive team games become accessible, such as "Brain Ring," "What? Where? When?" and "The Experts' Club." These types of interactive games help learners expand their knowledge about the country whose language they are studying, as well as test their general knowledge, erudition, and logic. The competitive format stimulates intellectual activity in foreign students, encouraging them to express their thoughts in Russian more quickly.

Such role-playing games can be conducted while studying any topic to assess students' mastery of vocabulary and grammar. In addition to their educational value, role-playing helps learners adapt more quickly to Russian-speaking environments, understand the realities of life in Russia, prepare for everyday communication scenarios, and overcome language barriers.

Another interactive form of learning is the creation of speech situations. For example: you are in an unfamiliar city and don't remember the address of your hotel; you have a toothache and need to make a dentist appointment; you have a high fever and need to call a doctor to your home; or you have a sore throat and need to visit a pharmacy to buy medicine. The main goal of these exercises is to activate speaking skills in Russian.

Discussion-based games (such as discussions, debates, and round tables) also play a significant role. The essence of these activities is to encourage the discussion and analysis of relevant topics that interest the learners. Each student has the opportunity to express their opinion on the issue at hand. The teacher acts only as a facilitator—guiding the conversation, expanding on the topic, and posing leading questions. The topics for discussion can vary widely—from favorite films and music to environmental issues, unemployment, tolerance, and more. These discussions should take

place in a relaxed atmosphere, helping learners communicate in Russian without fear, stress, or anxiety.

Case methods are a form of instruction that uses descriptions of real-life situations. Students must familiarize themselves with the case, understand the core problem, propose possible solutions, and choose the best one. This method encourages learners to engage in discussions on issues that do not have a single correct answer, and it teaches them to justify their viewpoints with clear arguments.

The project method involves independently planned and executed tasks in the target language—for example, creating a newspaper or magazine, compiling an article collection, organizing an exhibition, staging a play or concert, or preparing a report. These projects foster language use in meaningful, creative, and collaborative contexts.

Mind maps (or mental maps) enhance learning by visualizing thought processes. This method promotes creativity, improves all types of memory, accelerates learning, and helps develop communication skills. In teaching Russian as a Foreign Language (RFL), mind maps can be applied at various stages of learning and across all proficiency levels. During the presentation, memorization, and reinforcement of new material, this method can greatly facilitate any type of work with linguistic information.

Brainstorming (or “idea basket”) is an interactive technique typically used in small groups to gather all known information on a given topic, followed by discussion and systematization. This method encourages creativity and collaboration, as students contribute ideas freely and organize them to gain a deeper understanding of the topic.

The “**POPS formula**” (Position – Justification – Example – Conclusion) is a method in which the student takes a specific stance on a question or problem posed by the teacher, justifies their position, provides examples and arguments, and then reaches a conclusion. This approach helps students clarify their thoughts and present their opinions in a clear and concise manner. The POPS formula teaches students to express themselves briefly and clearly, argue effectively, and stay on topic. It can be used to practice expressing opinions (“I think...”, “I’m sure...”, “I’m absolutely certain...”, “In my opinion...”), agreeing or disagreeing (“I agree”, “I completely agree”, “Absolutely, I agree with you”, “I don’t think so”, “I think differently”), and responding to opposing viewpoints, resolving conflicts, and finding compromises.

Among the techniques used in RFL classes for beginner-level students, the following stand out:

“**Mosaic**” (or “**Puzzle**”), “**Snowball**”, “**Contradictions**”, “**Guess the Word**”, and “**Sociological Survey**.” These methods aim to engage students in interactive activities that promote active learning, creativity, and collaboration in language acquisition.

The “**Mosaic**” method is a teaching technique where a text with information is divided into small pieces, similar to a puzzle. The original text is presented by the teacher in a fragmented form, and the students’ task is to reconstruct the full text by putting the pieces together. This method encourages students to engage actively with the text and develop skills in comprehending and organizing information.

The “**Snowball**” technique is particularly effective at the beginner level when learning large groups of words or lexical-semantic groups such as vegetables, fruits, dairy products, meats, clothing items, colors, professions, animals, transportation, and so on. The essence of this technique is that the first student says a word from a specific lexical group (e.g., “apple” from the fruit group). The second student then adds another word from the same group (e.g., “banana”) and repeats both words in order. The next student adds another word and repeats all previous words in order (e.g., “apple, banana, orange”). This process continues, and in a playful way, students practice vocabulary and expand their lexical knowledge, filling in any gaps in their understanding.

The “**Contradictions**” technique also aims to expand the vocabulary. This technique can be used with both minimal “starter” vocabulary and more extensive lexical content. The task is for students to find the opposite word, or antonym. For example, with basic vocabulary, opposites could include: yes – no, here – there, hello – goodbye, good – bad, fast – slow, hard – easy, far – near, allowed – not allowed, etc. When using more advanced vocabulary, antonym pairs could include: open – close, turn on – turn off, receive – send, always – never, war – peace, north – south, east – west, etc. This method helps students deepen their understanding of the language by learning words in pairs and expanding their vocabulary range.

“**Guess the Word**” is an interactive technique predominantly used at the basic level of Russian language proficiency. In this activity, a student thinks of a word and explains it to the other participants without directly naming it. The teacher can provide words related to a specific topic for students to guess. For example, if the word is “winter,” the explanation might go like this: “This is the time when it gets very cold in Russia, it snows, and people wear warm clothes. In my country, it’s not so cold at this time, and we don’t get that much snow. What is it?” This game helps students practice vocabulary and description skills in a fun and

engaging way.

Watching and discussing videos, as well as listening to audio materials, are also essential interactive methods in language learning. Videos of various kinds can be used at any stage of the lesson according to the topic and objective, not just as supplementary material. Before showing a film, the teacher can ask the students 3-5 key questions. These questions will guide the students' focus during the film and form the basis for later discussion. The teacher can pause the film at selected points to conduct a discussion.

Listening to audio materials, such as news broadcasts, TV debates, discussions, and other forms of media, helps students develop essential skills for understanding fast, spontaneous speech. This practice improves their listening comprehension and ability to follow conversations in real-life situations.

The role of the teacher is to organize and stimulate the communication process, and then, when necessary, to correct it by providing appropriate language support to the students.

When interactive teaching methods are used, the group becomes more cohesive, and a collaborative atmosphere is created within the class. Students develop a desire not only to demonstrate their own knowledge but also to contribute to a collective outcome.

Learning occurs significantly faster than with traditional teaching methods. Students develop speaking skills that are sufficient and necessary for communication in various communicative situations.

Interactive methods are innovative forms of teaching that activate students' cognitive activity and foster independent reflection on the learning material. By using these methods, the classroom creates conditions for self-realization, where students can think creatively and find rational solutions to various situations.

The modern methodology for teaching Russian as a Foreign Language (RFL) is constantly evolving and improving, offering a wide range of interactive techniques. Every teacher can independently develop and select new methods, as well as combine and adapt existing ones depending on the students' language level, their abilities, and motivation.

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