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Innovative Approach in the System of Foreign Language Education

Инновационный подход в системе иноязычного образования

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Scientific and technological progress creates a new social order for educational institutions – the professionals who are constantly evolving in their professional field, can apply the received

knowledge, transform it to previously experienced situations and also independently find creative solutions to problems. The originality of the thinking processes is an essential characteristic of a modern specialist. Therefore the problem of creative thinking development is determined by the particularities of the innovative approach in the educational system. Foreign language has the potential for the use of innovative teaching methods and contribution to the process of formation of students' creative thinking.

Key words: creative thinking; foreign languages; innovative methods.

Научно-технический прогресс определяет новый социальный заказ для образовательных организаций – востребованными становятся те специалисты, которые постоянно развиваются в своей профессиональной области, умеют применять полученные знания, трансформировать их на ранее не встречавшиеся ситуации и самостоятельно находить нестандартные пути решения проблемы. Неординарность мыслительных процессов — это важная характеристика современного специалиста. Следовательно проблема формирования и развития творческого мышления обуславливается особенностями инновационного подхода в системе образования. Иностранный язык имеет все возможности для применения инновационных методов обучения и вносит свой вклад в процесс формирования творческого мышления обучающихся.

Ключевые слова: творческое мышление; иностранные языки; инновационные методы.

Today we can observe active introduction of innovative methods in the educational process. According to N. A. Mitina, an innovative teaching method is a project of specific pedagogical activities, consistently implemented in practice, the main indicator of which is the progressive beginning compared to the prevailing traditions and mass practices.

The search of new means, forms and methods of teaching plays a big role in this process, the issues of innovations in teacher's training have also become important.

A. V. Khutorskoy under pedagogical innovation implies an innovation or a purposeful change, bringing some sustainable elements or innovations in the educational environment that improve

performance of individual parts, components, and the educational system as a whole. Pedagogical innovations appear in the educational system as a result of adaptation to the constantly changing social environment, so they cover educational technology, educational content, educational programs and standards, educational process, organization of lessons and the environment of educational organizations.

Pedagogical innovations are considered to be innovations in the educational system, improving the course and results of the educational process. Pedagogical innovations link pedagogical traditions with the design of the future education.

Innovative methods of teaching today are gaining increasing recognition contribute to the implementation of the principle of continuity of knowledge transfer, formation of competencies, personal and meta-professional qualities.

An important component in the effectiveness of the educational innovation process is the willingness of teachers to introduce something new into their activities.

A pedagogical innovation, like any significant process of changes in the sphere of human activity, has its preconditions. Often the reasons for the consideration and introduction of innovations in the educational system include the recent crisis and the need for scientific support of the innovative activity.

Innovative approaches to teaching are divided into two main types, each of them corresponds to one of the main orientations of the educational process:

— innovation-modernization. They are based on the traditional reproductive orientation, that means that the teaching process is aimed at the transfer of knowledge and skills and development of students' algorithmic actions;

— innovation-transformation has a problematic orientation in its core. This innovative approach focuses on the research, it means, it creates in students the ability of self-searching and application of new knowledge, it also shapes the experience of creative activity.

Therefore the reproductive and problem orientation types of teaching are reflected in innovative teaching approaches.

The first transforms the traditional teaching process, based on the reproductive activities of students. According to this approach traditional didactic objectives and expected results are identified in the teaching process. The objective of the second approach is to develop the ability to work independently with new knowledge and to build one's own sequence of actions.

Today the modern society is undergoing profound social changes resulting from scientific and technological progress in all spheres of activities. As a result we can see the change in the social order and increasing need for creative, socially active specialists, who are able to find solutions to the problems of their professional activities independently. Therefore, educational innovations are an important condition for the development of all modern systems of education which objectives shall not be taken into the framework of traditional ideas.

Innovative methods of teaching foreign languages

Qualitative changes occur in the organization of educational process. A leading authority of teachers does not play a special role today any more, but their cooperation, collective understanding and mutual students-teachers interaction do. Passivity in receiving ready-made knowledge, waiting for the instructions from teachers are changed to the initiative and creativity of students. These changes characterize the alternative to the traditional type of teaching — innovation. Innovative approach requires new teaching methods.

The innovative direction of teachers' activity and formation of creative thinking of students at foreign language lessons implies that their participants should take part in the process of creation, development and use of pedagogical innovations and also in the practice and creation of special innovative educational environment.

Choosing a new method of teaching a foreign language and introducing it in his / her practice, teachers should take into account its features to understand that it has a lot of advantages, but the use of innovative methods in the system and their interconnection allows to achieve great results. A positive result of innovative teaching is also dependent on the conditions where students' creative thinking is formed. The analysis of literature revealed the following conditions:

- individual approach to students;
- favorable climate in the classroom, without criticism that will be the basis for independence of judgment and expression of students;
- careful selection of educational material that meets students' interests;
- systemic use of innovative methods of teaching foreign languages.

Such teaching methods like brainstorming, drawing up mind maps, clusters, case study, design and gaming techniques, and the use of modern information technologies can be considered as a priority at this point in the study of foreign languages. These methods are aimed at active intellectual and creative activity, formation of skills of self-organization, as they are based on the solution of problematic situations that students may encounter in their daily lives.

Positive emotions caused by such methods of study and the satisfied desire to learn something new, contribute to their cognitive, communicative and creative activity, which in turn effectively influence the process of learning foreign languages. Innovative methods used at lessons provide a sound basis for the education of the whole person and the formation of creative thinking of students.

It should be noted that the problem of the necessity for rapid acquisition of foreign languages demands active learning methods, where a student represents the "subject" of the educational process — performs creative tasks, participates in dialogues with the teacher (answers his/her questions and asks his/her own).

Among especially effective methods we can name the creation of situations where students can defend their opinion, discuss, ask questions, assess their own work and answers, and choose possible ways of solving educational tasks. We can classify the innovative methods used in the process of teaching a foreign language in the following way:

First, by the way of organizing the educational process:

- logical and task methods, which include gradual organization of the learning process, formulation of the pedagogical objectives, search for solutions, evaluation of the achieved results;

- training methods, which are a whole system of organization of educational activities for the optimization of the sequence of cognitive actions and ways of solving problems. This is a specifically created environment where students can easily identify their pros and cons and evaluate their achievements;

- gaming techniques, characterized by a gaming form of the educational relationship where educational objectives are already included in the gaming content (business games, round tables, discussions).

Secondly, by the forming direction:

- methods of developing the experience of creative activity: methods using difficulties, methods of temporary and sudden prohibitions, methods of lack of information, methods of absurd;

- methods of creative group problem solving: brainstorming and synectics.

For the quality educational process it makes sense to include the use of such creative tasks as solving and designing puzzles, crosswords, elements of theatrical performances to create logical grids and charts, and other possible options where students can demonstrate their creative potential.

Mind-maps and cluster methods are effective teaching tools for planning and development of associative thinking. The basic principle of these methods lies in the special visualization of thoughts — refusal of writing the educational material in a linear fashion.

An innovative method of mind-map or "memory card", which is a conventional record of ideas, was developed by Tony Buzan. Records look like spontaneous and associative written thoughts on paper, and the subject of thought generation should be in the center of the sheet and in the constant center of attention. The application of this method contributes to the accurate rendering of the ideas and relationships of its elements, concepts based on the identified themes and development of associative thinking. Mind-maps are easily editable because in the process of its creation, and later, they are also very easily reproduced in memory.

Teachers can use software or online resources to compile a mind-map, for example, [mindmeister.com](https://www.mindmeister.com) offers all the necessary tools for the design and creation of ideological cards.

The following method is called a cluster (cluster method). A cluster is a graphic classifier, which determines various relationships between objects, phenomena and ideas. This method helps to activate the imagination and individualization of education. The use of clusters in the process of learning a foreign language is understood as the union of two or more topics for further consideration and study. The cluster method contributes to the creation of favorable conditions for students' learning, the ability to structure the material under study, to identify the main ideas, to identify problems and ways to resolve them. This technique allows students to understand what they learn better.

The clusters are quite versatile — they can be used, when working with a text, as it will serve as a clear and evident plan. Clusters can also be introduced during the first acquaintance with the topic, or the systematization of the already learned material or text. This method is successfully used for individual or group work.

The cluster technique on the lessons of foreign language allows students to retell texts easier, because it is simpler to remember a large amount of data, using such logical chains that effectively influence students' cognitive motivation. Due to the fact that every cluster is unique and not subject to grading by a teacher, students develop their creative thinking.

Case study or case-method is the next innovative teaching method, which includes real situations in the educational process which students face in their life. In the course of the case method, students are asked to analyze a certain situation, understand the problem, identify possible ways to solve it, discuss them and decide which of them is the most effective. The base of a case is the actual material that reflects the real situation or is close to it.

A teacher performs the role of an observer and organizer of the classwork: he directs the students' discussion. He also provides introduction and conclusion, is responsible for the working climate in the group, supports the business style of communication between groups, evaluates the group or individual work and the outcome, on the basis of students' objectivity and validity of their judgments.

It is important to keep in mind that when working with the case, the problem proposed to students must be of an appropriate level of complexity and involve multiple solution methods, and in the course of the discussion, each group should identify its strengths and weaknesses, to analyze the problem and justify their point of view.

The specificity of the case method allows students to show their knowledge through contributions to the group work even with minimal knowledge of a foreign language. It is a big advantage to work with students at various levels of proficiency. This method allows teachers to involve everyone in classroom activities.

S. E. Kaplina offers her own classification of innovative methods of teaching which are associated with the establishment of interpersonal interaction through the dialogue in the process of assimilation of educational material, as well as contribution to the implementation of the principle of continuity of knowledge transfer, formation of competencies, personal and meta-professional qualities of students. These methods include: a method of direct instruction, a method of electronic self-directed education, a method of pedagogic studio work, a method of interdisciplinary projecting.

Method of direct instruction. This method was proposed by German researchers and educators Jürgen Wiechmann and Jochen Grell.

The essence of the method is to achieve a more informed perception of educational material to learn. This

approach contributes to the efficient perception of the material by students. The teacher in the classroom is given a central role in managing the overall development of events.

In implementing the method of direct

instruction into practice teachers should: concentrate on a clear formulation of the problem; support the mobile nature of the learning process, use short remarks of individual character (in the form of questions, case assignments, etc.) that enhance the effectiveness of the educational process; give a small explanation when students have difficulties when learning the material; contribute to the belief in the success of learners, actively supporting their initiative; being an authority in the field of teaching; do not behave authoritatively.

The effectiveness of the method is demonstrated by various forms of training. Lessons where the method of direct instruction was used can be considered successful if three major steps to achieve the goal are taken: general presentation and demonstration of the lesson's objectives; performance of tasks under the teacher's supervision and individual exercises without teacher's instruction. A teacher controls training, trying to involve all learners in the process of cooperation. The use of direct instruction is appropriate during role-playing games, performing tasks, group dynamic seminars, laboratory work.

The founder of the *electronic self-directed method* is T. M. Balykhina.

Collaboration tools such as an online discussion forum is a kind of message board, news is a way to exchange ideas; white board is a tool that allows teachers and their students to share graphic images; chats mean enabling instant messaging, web-tours and travel is a means and method of the academic «journey»; unilateral (slide shows, accompanied by learners' explanation) and bilateral presentation (the latter allows learners to ask questions during the presentation, make comments, otherwise participate in an event, etc.) – make free interaction possible for the remote learners to solve general educational problems.

When using the *method of pedagogic studio work* in the educational process, the main aim of a lesson (given in a form of pedagogic conferences, round tables) is students' receiving additional topics with the help of a teacher under an obligatory expressed students' initiative in mastering

new knowledge. The method of pedagogic studio work was offered by E. V. Nevmerzhitskaya. Here are some leading principles of work in pedagogic studios:

participation principle

(all the participants of the process can influence its course and result at any time;

integral principle

(it underlines the role of a teacher as a guide and assistant in solving various problems);

principle of balance between the process and the result

(it means the achievements of every participant, and the group in general, and the knowledge they gained).

Another innovative method is *interdisciplinary projecting* proposed by S. E. Kaplina. Active creative work is a powerful stimulus for new the appearance of new ideas through self-research activities, fulfilment of creative tasks with the help of knowledge received while studying different subjects. The main characteristics of a project are novelty, originality and a possible practical realization.

When speaking about the methods of using Internet in foreign language teaching, it is necessary to focus on the leading component of the training — communicative orientation. And the Internet with its didactic capabilities can provide training in all types of speech activity (listening, speaking, reading, writing). The use of Internet resources in foreign language teaching helps to engage students in creative activities and allows them to visualize their work. Their implementation in the educational process enhances cognitive activity of students, making the educational process more interesting and effective. For example, we can mention such online tools as ZOOBURST (zooburst.com) that allows teachers to create 3D books and make the process of writing stories in a foreign language funnier; storyjumper.com, a service which allows to create illustrated books or animated and colorful presentations; [LEARNING_APPS](http://LEARNING_APPS.org) (learningApps.org), the service that has a large number of prepared schemes of exercises (gap-filling tests, finding the match, the chronological line, puzzles, quizzes, crosswords, etc.).

Thus, innovative methods contribute to the enhancement of motivation and interest of students to learn foreign languages, significantly improving the process of teaching and having advantages over traditional methods. Scientific and technological progress demands from education institutions to prepare the professionals who can apply the received knowledge and independently find creative solutions to problems. The originality of the thinking processes is an essential characteristic of a modern specialist. A modern teacher is characterized by a high level of professional competence, manifested in the following qualities: flexibility, pedagogical thinking, mobility, adaptability to complex situations, ability to work in a group, openness to new ideas, commitment to professional development. An important role in the continuous professional growth is assigned to the readiness of teachers to creative activity. Foreign language teaching has a potential for the use of innovative teaching methods and contribution

to the process of formation of students' creative thinking. This subject has a high communicative focus and the active involvement of students in the educational process also gives the opportunity to activate personal creative potential. All this facilitates the adaptation of future graduates to modern social conditions. So, innovative methods of teaching foreign languages respond to the basic direction of development of the modern educational system where teachers' work is focused on the development of a creative thinking personality with individual qualities and ability to independently organize his/her cognitive activity.

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