

Секция «Методика преподавания иностранных языков и лингводидактика: Актуальные проблемы методики преподавания иностранных языков»

Age as an indicator of teacher attitudes towards literature in language education in Russia

Научный руководитель – **Paran Amos**

Calafato Raees

Graduate (master)

Imperial College London, London, United Kingdom

E-mail: raees.calafato@gmail.com

The use of literature in language education (LLE) is witnessing a steady rise in popularity globally following the adoption of communicative methods of teaching, which has led to a greater focus on the use of authentic texts in classroom instruction (Teranishi, et al., 2015). However, this has occurred against the backdrop of declining reading trends among younger learners and even teachers (Skaar, et al., 2018). In Russia, for example, several studies have pointed to worrying trends in the reading skills of learners, especially when reading in a foreign language (Kravtsova & Galiguzova; 2015; Belkova & Chubak; 2016; Abramova, et al., 2017). It was decided, as a result, to investigate the attitudes of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in Russia, to ascertain if age was a factor when determining teacher attitudes towards LLE, a subset of authentic texts in language education. The goal was to ascertain if younger EFL teachers were growing up with literature reading habits that were significantly different from older EFL teachers. The information thus gathered would help in identifying whether current LLE trends were having a negative impact on younger teachers, which would in turn lead to possible modifications to teacher training methods and education that could reverse this trend.

The study employed an online semi-structured questionnaire to collect data on Russian EFL teacher attitudes towards LLE. A total of 140 teachers from various teaching contexts participated in the study. Data from the questionnaire was analyzed using SPSS 22, and a reliability analysis of the questionnaire indicated a Cronbach's Alpha of .924. For age-related comparisons, three groupings were used in all instances: ≤ 30 , 31-49 and ≥ 50 . These roughly mirror the three distinct development periods of EFL in Russia, as described by Ustinova (2005), Ter-Minasova (2005), McCaughey (2005), Lazaretnaya (2012), Ivanova & Tivyayeva (2015) and Lovtsevich (2016). Within the parameters of the study, the ≤ 30 group represents teachers who received their teacher education in the post-perestroika period, the 31-49 age group represents the period of transition that perestroika brought to the EFL landscape, and the ≥ 50 group represents the pre-perestroika Soviet period. For data analysis, the Kruskal-Wallis test was used to test for whether there were significant differences between the three age groups, while Spearman's rank-order correlation was used to check for strength and direction (positive or negative) of association between respondents' attitudes towards literature as EFL learners and their attitudes towards literature as EFL teachers. The Kruskal-Wallis tests were followed by post-hoc tests using the Dunn-Bonferroni method to identify the precise location of the differences between the pairs within the test samples. When the Bonferroni tests were significant, the effect size was calculated using Hedge's *g*, which is recommended when the sample sizes are different. The one-way ANOVA was used in only one instance, i.e. to test for significant differences in the mean ages of participants based on their teaching context.

The results of the study revealed that while an overwhelming majority of participants held very positive views about literature in language teaching, and almost every participant reported using literature to teach English, there were statistically significant differences between

how younger and older EFL teachers approached LLE. Indeed, in some instances, age-based differences were quite stark, and older respondents tended to use literary texts significantly more frequently than younger respondents. Younger respondents (the under 30 group) also reported enjoying reading literature, both in Russian and in English, to a lesser extent than the ≥ 50 age group of respondents, with a fairly large effect size. Younger teachers from the study also did not appear to believe as strongly in the benefits of literature as a language resource. The data also revealed that younger respondents encountered literary texts less frequently in secondary school and at university.

References

- 1) Abramova I., Ananyina A., Shishmolina E. Teaching English to Non-linguistic Students: Foreign Language Community Model. *Pedagogical Journal*, 2017, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 147-155.
- 2) Belkova A. E., Chubak P. A. Metodicheskie sposoby formirovaniya chitatel'skogo interesa [Methods of developing interest in reading]. *Molodoj uchenyj [Young Scientist]*, 2016, vol. 11, pp. 1663-1666.
- 3) Ivanova V., Tivyaeva I. Teaching Foreign Languages in Soviet and Present-Day Russia: A Comparison of Two Systems. *Zbornik Instituta za Pedagoska Istrazivanja*, 2015, vol. 47, no. 2, pp. 305-324.
- 4) Kravtsova I., Galiguzova A. Blended Learning: In Search of the Right Blend. In D. Kryachkov, E. B. Yastrebova, & O. Kravtsova (Eds.), *The Magic of Innovation: New Techniques and Technologies in Teaching Foreign Languages* (pp. 67-83). Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015. 334 p.
- 5) Lazaretnaya O. English as a Lingua Franca in Russia: A Sociolinguistic Profile of Three Generations of English Users. *Diss. dokt. ped. nauk*. Lisbon, 2012. 222 p.
- 6) Lovtsevich G. Education. In Z. G. Proshina, A. A. Eddy (Eds.), *Russian English: History, Functions, and Features* (pp. 132-140). Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016. 319 p.
- 7) McCaughey K. The kasha syndrome: English language teaching in Russia. *World Englishes*, 2005, vol. 24, no. 4, pp. 455-459.
- 8) Skaar H., Elvebakk L., Nilssen J. H. Literature in decline? Differences in pre-service and in-service primary school teachers' reading experiences. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 2018, vol. 69, pp. 312-323.
- 9) Ter-Minasova S. G. Traditions and innovations: English language teaching in Russia. *World Englishes*, 2005, vol. 24, no. 4, pp. 445-454. doi:10.1111/j.0883-2919.2005.00427.x
- 10) Teranishi M., Saito Y., Wales K. *Literature and Language Learning in the EFL Classroom*. New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. 329 p.
- 11) Ustinova I. P. English in Russia. *World Englishes*, 2005, vol. 24, no. 2, pp. 239-251.