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Multimodality in teaching a foreign language to students of philological and pedagogical disciplines

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Abstract

Relevance. The era of digital technologies necessitates the exploration of new avenues in various domains, including education. In the modern world, multimodality is an essential aspect, encompassing diverse modes of information transmission and all types of communication. The relevance of this study lies in its examination of how multimodality can be effectively utilized in the pedagogy of foreign languages, particularly for students in philological and pedagogical disciplines.

Purpose. The primary aim of this research was to investigate the concept of multimodality and its application in teaching foreign languages. The study focused on identifying how multimodal methods can enhance the educational process and meet the set learning objectives.

Methodology. This theoretical research employed methods such as induction and deduction for constructing and presenting scientific reasoning. It also utilized various techniques for collecting and systematizing information from previous studies. The methodology was designed to explore the fundamental aspects of multimodality and its pedagogical implications.

Results. The study first examined the concept of multimodality and its connection with pedagogy. It identified the conditions under which multimodal methods could be applied in foreign language lessons. The research found that multimodal techniques engage students more effectively, making the learning process more exciting and interesting.

Conclusions. The research concluded that the use of multimodal methods in teaching foreign languages offers significant pedagogical benefits. It enhances student engagement and supports comprehensive learning. The practical significance of this study lies in its contribution to the development of multimodality problems, suggesting that these methods can broadly realize educational objectives in foreign language education.

Keywords: means of expression; verbalism; teaching methodology; education.

Introduction

In the modern world, information is transmitted and perceived through various systems and channels that generate meanings and can interact simultaneously. Communication is not limited to the system of signs but has a special form of symbiotic interaction. Monomodality is gradually replaced by a more complex and integrated way of presenting information [1-3]. Communicative processes are now based on the complex interaction of

different sign systems, i.e., on multimodality, so speech communication has a multimodal character. The problem of multimodality is one of the key problems in modern non-verbal semiotics. The main aspects of multimodality are the study of verbal, non-verbal, mixed verbal-non-verbal, physical components of gesture communication and the creation of models of verbal, non-verbal, mixed behaviour [4, 5]. Modality is a perceptual or psychological phenomenon related to the perception of information. The

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term “modality” is borrowed from psychology and refers to the sensory channels of perception. In cognitive linguistics, the term is defined as one of the information codes included in the concept of hybrid text. In psycholinguistics, modality refers to a particular sensory system, modality describes the properties and characteristics of sensations, signals, stimuli, information, and receptors. This modality is socioculturally predetermined and has its traditions of modelling and dissemination of information in society [6-9]. A correct comprehension of modality requires an understanding of a particular culture. The constituent elements of any culture are ideas, world-view, beliefs, norms, values, and social factors that influence the life of society and human behaviour among other people. There are several types of modalities: olfactory, tactile, gustatory, visual, and auditory.

The main function of multimodality is to form meanings with the help of various semiotic means – writing, language, image – corresponding socio-cultural conventions. Multimodality is a description of general regularities and rules of interaction in the communicative act of verbal and non-verbal signs, a combination of different codes for presenting information. Communication theory defines a code as an element of the basic model of communication that conveys meaning. Communicative codes are of three types: verbal, paralinguistic and extra-linguistic. Verbal code is the transmission of information through written and spoken language. Paralanguage code includes all speech modes of conveying information expressed by verbal code.

This category includes tempo, tone, timbre, and intonation. Extralinguistic (unspeakable/non-verbal) code is represented by means not related to language: facial expressions, gestures, posture, eye contact, distance between interlocutors, time, and place. Multimodality describes the general laws and specific rules of interaction in an oral communicative act using verbal or non-verbal signs. G. Kress [10] considers the interaction of verbal texts and images, video, language and gestures, text size and colour as multimodal phenomena. Any text combining different semiotic codes is multimodal and requires simultaneous updating of several perceptual channels, visual and auditory. In discourse analysis, the use of multiple media or channels of information transmission is usually referred to as multimodality. Multimodality describes communication in terms of the textual, audiovisual, linguistic, and spatial modes that are used to compose and deliver a message.

The use of multimodal means in foreign language lessons allows the teacher to diversify the arsenal of tasks offered to students, considering their speciality and sphere of interests. Teaching foreign languages to pedagogy students has its peculiarities, which are important to take into account when selecting material and practical tasks in the classroom. Multimodal language learning is very emotional, active, and multisensory, such language learning can integrate the learner, making him/her realize and critically relate to the cultural characteristics and mechanisms underlying different methods of communication. The study aims to explore the concept of multimodality and the peculiarities of its use in teaching foreign languages to students of pedagogical specialties.

Materials and Methods

This study is theoretical, i.e., in the course of it the main scientific concepts corresponding to the research topic were defined, the phenomena under study were systematized, and the results obtained were generalized. The essence of theoretical research is to study and collect data about the object of research by using deductive and inductive methods of scientific cognition. Theoretical research aims to discover and recognize new connections and relationships within the topic under study, which will not be the result of the research as a whole but will be an important part of solving problematic issues related to the subject of research. In this type of research, the scientist collects and systematizes the already existing results of other scientists, achieves his results, which are in line with the set goal and identifies promising directions for research on the topic. In this regard, appropriate methods of theoretical cognition were chosen for this study. Namely, the methods of induction and deduction, as well as various methods of systematization and generalization of the collected data about the object under study.

Deduction is the action or process by which a conclusion is drawn from reasoning. It is a logical process in which, given certain premises and certain rules that guarantee its correctness, a logically necessary conclusion follows. Usually, the term is also defined as reasoning that leads to specific propositions from general propositions. Induction is the reverse of deduction, but also a logical process or action characterized by the study of specific properties of an object, which subsequently leads the scientist to universal statements (or, in statistics, to the formulation of statistical regularities), which are the starting point in applying the method of deduction. Any reasoning is impossible without the use of these two methods, they are the same and determine only the logic of the construction of the researcher's thought. In this study, the methods of deduction and induction were used in the study of individual categories – “multimodality”, “foreign language teaching” and “students of pedagogical specialties”, having considered the features of all the above categories separately, their interaction was studied, which formulated the research topic.

Then, after collecting the necessary information, systematization methods were applied, the main function of which was to organize the obtained information according to some criterion, e.g., chronologically. In this study, the information was systematized logically – introduction, description of the methodology used, presentation of the findings, discussion, and summarization. Accordingly, the method of systematizing information based on logic was applied. When searching for suitable literature sources, the main criterion was the relevance of the source to the research topic, as well as the relevance of the results described therein. Because the concept of multimodality in the humanities is considered to be quite young, research in this area is still under development and scholars are still in search of new areas to explore. However, at the same time, this fact makes it clear that current research on the topic has not yet lost its relevance.

Results and Discussion

Multimodal learning is a learning strategy based on the use of different types of media and educational tools to teach students, usually through a learning management system. Multimodal learning uses not just the words on a textbook page or the voice of an instructor giving a lecture, but a whole mix of these elements using video, images, audio files, and hands-on exercises to give the student the best possible learning experience. Instructors may use any combination of teaching methods; however, with multimodal teaching, the instructor must use more than one method. This effective teaching style implements many strategies to ensure that students understand and retain the information learned during the lecture. The fundamentals of multimodal learning have been proven to increase student achievement. Multimodal learning is effective because it suits all learning styles. Monomodality is another learning style in which students receive information through only one method, such as a visual diagram or lecture. In multimodal learning, the lecturer implements a visual aid to reinforce the lesson or creates a multimedia presentation that illustrates the material presented during the lecture.

One of the challenges of multimodal learning is avoiding the potential overload associated with the use of multiple interactive learning tools. If the class becomes too complex and varied, students will find it difficult to focus on what is important. Overload is caused by having too many introductions or arrangements in a class at once, so it is important to organize the class in such a way that it is moderately multimodal, i.e., to maintain a balance between the use of traditional and interactive media. Examples of multimodal learning:

1. Case-based learning. Learning becomes easier when students consider real-life examples. When developing new materials or concepts, it is recommended to apply them in real-life situations, such examples motivate students when they realize that the acquired knowledge is necessary and useful in everyday life.

2. Multimedia research projects. This approach is also widespread. It requires students to research and find what they need from a variety of media sources. It can be books, newspapers and magazines, podcasts and audio recordings, video clips and news or whatever they find from a reliable source. The next step is to create and share a presentation. Students should create presentations and highlight their findings, making the material as attractive and interesting as possible to keep the audience interested.

3. Developmental games. Gamification has a significant impact on the e-learning sector and the growth of student performance. Games make the learning process more fun, engage students and increase the level of motivation. In such an environment, the level of stress and irritation is minimized because in the process of playing games, the student unconsciously consumes new knowledge without noticing it.

4. Think, compare, share. This strategy is also widely adopted in multimodal learning. Through this strategy, students' thinking and co-operation skills with other students are improved. And in the presentation stage, the expression of thought or communication skills are improved.

Multimodal learning is very effective in improving the quality of the learning process and increasing student productivity. All these learning methods and tools are easy to implement through e-learning channels. In the digital industry, some automation tools even improve the process and help to avoid manual mechanical work. The professional linguistic community argues that the current educational programs aimed at teaching foreign languages in general education institutions do not guarantee a high level of training and mastery of the language as a means of communication, a tool of professional activity. However, the most important function of language is the communicative function, and the task of education is to develop communicative skills.

Discourse is multimodal – in its different semiotic systems interact simultaneously and convey information, taking into account the communicative traditions of society. Lecture discourse is a symbiosis of several modalities. Multimodality of lecture discourse is the simultaneous interaction of different semiotic systems that transmit information, taking into account the communicative traditions of society. Methods and tools for analysing multimodal discourses are a topical problem, as evidenced by numerous publications on this topic, but at present there is no unified terminological apparatus. Within the framework of multimodality of lecture discourse, the aim is to study the various verbal, non-verbal and mixed (verbal-non-verbal) physical components of gesture communication and to create models of verbal, non-verbal and mixed behaviour, their algorithmization and computer implementation. Cultural and social rituals, forms of regulated behaviour, and deviations from non-verbal and mixed communication should also be considered.

According to I.P. Khutyuz [11] for the successful development of lecture discourse, it is necessary to bring it as close as possible to multimodality. The main purpose of lecture discourse is to provide the listener with information on a certain topic and clarity, which is usually achieved with the help of interactive teaching aids. Communication is not limited to linguistic means of conveying information. Accordingly, an effective oral presentation should contain elements of several semiotic systems (modalities) – visual aids, intonation, and dialogue. Speeches of lecturers have individual techniques of characterization, which they use to create a certain impact on the audience. Intonation tools of influence, gestures, facial expressions, pauses, and laughter form a system of signs, that supplement or replace verbal means of communication.

The appearance of the lecturer and the distance to the speaker also play a role in the quality of information perception. Non-verbal elements serve as an indicator of the speaker's current emotional state, the pace, and type of presentation are considered an expression of the speaker's competence. If only one audio channel is used during a lecture presentation, such a lecture can be seen as inefficient and monotonous, depriving students of access to a variety of digital and printed information and reducing them to recording information offered by lecturers' dictation.

The most studied visually observed non-verbal means of expressing the speaker's personality are kinaesthetic (external manifestations of feelings and emotions through

gestures and facial expressions) and proxemic (position of people in the habit space). To describe the non-verbal component, kinesic means and ways of their realization (head movement, facial expressions, mimesis, manual gestures) are taken into account [12, 13]. The theory of multimodality also raises several questions regarding the tools for analysing non-textual components and levels of research.

The following levels of complex multimodality are distinguished: micro-level – division into separate codes and sub-codes and identification of different semiotic communicative potentials and resources containing each sign system in a complex communicative process; meso-level – specific processes of intra- and inter-code transcription, specific interaction of micro-level elements, consideration of additional semantic potentials and their modification of the general meaning of communication. Meso- and micro-levels can be used when considering communicative processes, for example, in the context of a lecture. The macro level covers another domain, such as a particular discursive genre or discourse. These levels are not isolated from each other, but rather integrated, and each larger level contains smaller levels. The macro level includes both the potentials of each code individually and their mutual activation on an abstract level. Three groups of methods for analysing different codes (language, image, or sound) of multimodal information are considered in the German-language literature: quantitative, qualitative and combinatorial methods.

Along with the introduction of technology into student life, another problem in foreign language acquisition arises. Many students do not find it necessary to learn the rules of spelling and punctuation because they rely on the spell checker built into smartphones and computer programmes [14]. The trends in recent decades are as follows: the traditional, linearly unfolding, lengthy book text written in classical language two centuries ago is difficult for today's students to read and comprehend. According to research, students today can focus on each task, in this case, an educational task, for only six minutes in a row without paying attention to the device [15-17]. On the one hand, in conformity with some researchers, with the digitization of the educational process, young people develop multitasking – the ability to perform several tasks at the same time, which is undoubtedly a rather positive personality trait when performing tasks conscientiously.

On the other hand, this approach should not be so optimistic. Modern digital devices can hurt student engagement, creating attention imbalance and chaos [18]. As a result, students do not have an understanding of foreign languages as a holistic system. There is a need to adapt some courses in a short period, as there is no possibility to test updated methods on small groups of students over several years, and they are immediately familiarized with a whole stream of students. Therefore, students have to acquire new knowledge and skills in an accelerated mode, and educators have to adapt curricula and teaching methods quickly to improve the efficiency of the educational process. For this purpose, teachers should have in their arsenal extensive illustrative material and, in addition to printed journalistic texts, various messages in audio and video format to help identify errors in texts.

It is effective to carry out foreign language teaching for students of pedagogical specialties based on the analysis of artistic and journalistic materials, the base of which is constantly updated and modernized. Students should learn to write correctly on the artistic works of the classics of literature: teachers need to inculcate linguistic tastes and pay attention not only to grammar but also to the arrangement of punctuation marks in great writers. The selected examples are quite complex, but at the same time more effective. Appeal to modern journalistic texts contributes to the consolidation of the linguistic norm. For this purpose, the reverse method is used. Therefore, in addition to samples of fiction texts, students should be offered study materials on contemporary pedagogy news, in which various types of violations were committed, and make a card index with examples of language errors found by students in journalistic texts. Thanks to such an approach, teachers demonstrate what mistakes should be avoided in speech, in written texts, form linguistic reflections, and eliminate the practice of superficial reading [19].

Pedagogical universities need to solve the problem of comprehensive modernization of the teaching process, as media systems are rapidly transforming and information technologies are rapidly developing. Undoubtedly, higher education institutions will not abandon the classical long-standing teaching methods, but some of them have already become archaic and need to be finalized. The reformatting of curricula includes the introduction of digitization of the process: interactive learning (discussions, creative assignments, work in pairs and triples), use of illustrative materials, presentations, and online dictionaries. In the conditions of modernization, universities should be equipped with computer laboratories, multimedia studios, projectors, interactive whiteboards, and other special devices so that teachers can use the most modern teaching methods.

For example, musical non-verbal language is original and unique, it is very different from verbal language, and yet, there are points of contact between them, which, have great pedagogical potential and can instil the skills of correct speaking and spelling in foreign languages in the complex, diverse and valuable process of student learning [20]. In foreign language classes of pedagogical specialties can be used musical elements of language teaching as an introduction of non-verbal communicative function of discourse or speech replica, dialogue. That is the communicative process of exchanging opinions through music or musical pauses.

Thus, it is obvious that learning foreign languages is an important component of the whole system of education in universities. The development of technology and scientific progress bring both positive and negative changes in all spheres of life, including education. On the one hand, thanks to modern technologies, the learning process becomes more diverse and interesting, teachers have the opportunity to integrate into the learning process what will be interesting to the current student, oriented to modern trends, which is the use of multimodality in pedagogy. But, on the other hand, modern technologies are aimed at the maximum facilitation of human activity in all aspects, including the learning process: T9 typing system, online dictionaries, calculators, text generators. All of these

demotivate students to independently search for solutions to pedagogical problems. Therefore, one of the goals of the modern teacher is to find a balance between these two aspects, which will result in teaching foreign languages using information technology.

Conclusions

Thus, it is obvious that foreign language learning is an important component of the whole system of education in higher education institutions. For a comprehensive study of lecture discourse used in pedagogy, it is necessary to use different directions of consideration of multimodality in its linguistic and sociological understanding, combining the analysis of verbal and non-verbal means of information transmission. Thus, the increased interest in the study of multimodality is associated with the expansion of the boundaries of textuality.

A multimodal text is a text encoded by semiotic heterogeneous means: verbal and non-verbal. Multimodal information understanding is interdependent, that is, all components of communication are interpreted collectively and recursively, thus meanings are constantly processed and changed. In addition to language, the central code, non-verbal components play an important role in conveying the perception of information. The audio-visual component is the catalyst that allows the recipient to fully perceive the information being transmitted.

In foreign language teaching, multimodality serves various purposes: it enhances student engagement, fosters

creativity, stimulates imaginative thinking, and promotes associative cognition. It functions as a tool for addressing specific challenges or achieving broader educational objectives. At its core, multimodality facilitates communication and the conveyance of emotions, ideas, and perspectives. By integrating different modes of expression, such as visuals, gestures, or technology, students gain insight into the cultural and linguistic nuances of language. The examples provided underscore the potential of multimodal approaches in foreign language instruction, yet the field remains underexplored, warranting further investigation by scholars and educators alike.

Future research in multimodality within foreign language teaching should explore the effectiveness of different multimodal strategies in achieving language learning outcomes and consider cultural influences on multimodal learning experiences. Additionally, investigating the integration of technology into multimodal instruction, developing teacher training programs, and creating robust assessment methods are vital.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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Мультимодальність у навчанні іноземної мови студентів філологічних та педагогічних спеціальностей

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Анотація

Актуальність. Епоха цифрових технологій зумовлює необхідність пошуку нових шляхів у різних сферах, у тому числі в освіті. У сучасному світі мультимодальність є важливим аспектом, що охоплює різноманітні способи передачі інформації та всі види комунікації. Актуальність цього дослідження полягає в тому, що воно розглядає, як мультимодальність може бути ефективно використана в педагогіці іноземних мов, зокрема для студентів філологічних та педагогічних дисциплін.

Мета. Основною метою цього дослідження було вивчення концепції мультимодальності та її застосування у викладанні іноземних мов. Дослідження зосереджене на виявленні того, як мультимодальні методи можуть покращити навчальний процес та досягти поставлених навчальних цілей.

Методологія. Це теоретичне дослідження використовувало такі методи, як індукція та дедукція для побудови та представлення наукових міркувань. Також були використані різні методи збору та систематизації інформації з попередніх досліджень. Методологія була розроблена для вивчення фундаментальних аспектів мультимодальності та її педагогічних наслідків.

Результати. У дослідженні вперше розглянуто поняття мультимодальності та його зв'язок з педагогікою. Визначено умови, за яких мультимодальні методи можуть застосовуватися на уроках іноземної мови. Дослідження показало, що мультимодальні методи більш ефективно залучають студентів, роблячи процес навчання більш захоплюючим та цікавим.

Висновки. Дослідження показало, що використання мультимодальних методів у викладанні іноземних мов має значні педагогічні переваги. Вони підвищують зацікавленість студентів та сприяють комплексному навчанню. Практичне значення цього дослідження полягає в тому, що воно робить внесок у розробку проблем мультимодальності, припускаючи, що ці методи можуть широко реалізовувати освітні цілі в іншомовній освіті.

Ключові слова: засоби вираження; вербалізм; методика викладання; освіта.