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Микрообучение в методике преподавания иностранных языков: историографическое исследование

Введение. Методическая мысль в области преподавания иностранных языков, трансформируясь под влиянием социально-экономических факторов и стремительной цифровизации образовательной сферы, претерпевает значительные изменения, выражающиеся в появлении новых подходов и методов в иноязычном образовании. Наше исследование, направленное на изучение историографии российской и зарубежной методической мысли, актуализирует проблему понимания основных векторов и перспектив развития современной методики преподавания иностранных языков на примере микрообучения как одного из новейших методических инструментов.

Целью исследования является изучение генезиса методической мысли в области преподавания иностранных языков в России и странах Запада с фокусом на микрообучение.

Материалы и методы. Для проведения историографического анализа мы обращались к таким теоретическим методам исследования, как анализ научной литературы, систематизация и анализ полученных данных. К материалам исследования относятся рекомендации ЮНЕСКО, научно-методические статьи из периодических изданий, методические пособия и рукописи российских и зарубежных авторов по данной проблематике.

Результаты. В ходе проведенного исследования была предложена авторская периодизация развития российской методической мысли в области иноязычного образования, включающая три ключевых этапа, датирующихся 1920 – 1950 гг., концом 1950-х – 1980 гг., серединой 1990-х гг. по настоящий момент. В качестве ведущих методов, оказавших значительное влияние на современную методику преподавания иностранных языков, были определены коммуникативный, аудиолингвальный и лексический подходы. Выявлены современные тренды в иноязычном обучении: нейродидактика, персонализированное, проблемно- и личностно-ориентированное обучение, андрагогика. Анализ показал, что микрообучение характеризуется наличием методического потенциала, необходимого для новейших обучающих подходов в соответствии с выявленными трендами, сохраняя преемственность в отношении основных методов преподавания иностранных языков 20-го века.

Заключение. Полученные в ходе анализа данные позволяют дать общее представление о генезисе микрообучения с точки зрения его применения в обучении иностранным языкам. Тем не менее, микрообучение как самостоятельный метод еще не обладает достаточной научной и практической базой. Результаты представленного историографического исследования могут быть использованы для дальнейшего теоретического и практического изучения микрообучения как методики преподавания иностранных языков.

Ключевые слова: иностранные языки, методика преподавания иностранных языков, историографический анализ, микрообучение

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The place of microlearning in foreign language teaching methodology: historiographic study

Introduction. This study investigates the evolution of language teaching methodology in Russia and Western countries over time, with a focus on analysing the features of the microlearning concept as it relates to the ever-changing landscape of language education.

Aim. The aim of the study is to examine the development and evolution of foreign language teaching methodology in Russia and Western countries, with a particular focus on the Russian context. By conducting a thorough review of relevant scientific and professional literature, we aim to trace the progression of methodology in general, identify prevailing trends in language teaching, and evaluate the role of microlearning in the contemporary language education framework.

Research methods. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic, the study employed historiographic analysis, which entails a systematic review of relevant literature, data collection, and data analysis.

Results. Our study has uncovered that both in Russia and Western countries, there is a rich historical background for methodological thinking in language education. The study also revealed that language teaching methodologies have evolved to include a diverse range of novel approaches based on societal demand. Our findings suggest that microlearning, which is a recent addition to language education methodologies, is gaining popularity as a teaching method, while some modern foreign language teaching models have already incorporated the use of microlearning tools and strategies.

Conclusion. In spite of microlearning being gradually implemented in language education, there is still a need for theoretical and practical research to refine and develop this method for effective language learning. The findings presented in this article can be used as a basis for further development of the microlearning concept as a distinct educational approach in language instruction.

Keywords: microlearning, foreign language teaching, teaching approaches, teaching methods, genesis, historiographic study

INTRODUCTION

anguage education is a vital focus for many modern nations, as the global mission is to develop strong connections grounded in collaboration and mutual aid. In their report on foreign language teaching and linguistic diversity, UNESCO underscores the significance of developing innovative foreign language teaching approaches featuring digital components to augment the efficacy of language education [42]. This evolution is motivated by the need to address current challenges and problems in the field of research.

Since the emergence of language education, practitioners and scholars have been faced with multiple challenges and sought innovative ways to enhance the efficiency of the language acquisition process. Among the well-recognised methods are the Lexical Approach [25], the Audio-lingual Method (ALT) [23], Dogme ELT [31; 41], problem-based learning [6], task-based learning (TBL) [13], the flipped classroom model [9], student-centered approach [1], and the Communicative Approach (CA) [6; 32], which currently serves as the foundation of many modern methodologies.

Additionally, a large number of studies explore novel teaching methods incorporating not only a linguistic component, but also neuroscientific advances to address non-methodological issues in language learning. Those investigate the problems of motivation [9], emotional aspects [10], teacher well-being [14], coping strategies [28], age-effects [4; 46] and students' engagement [39]. As for neurodidactics in foreign language acquisition, aspects such as congruency effect [7], the Emotional Approach [27], neuropsychological aspects [34], and personalised education [45] were explored.

Microlearning is one such approach that was first developed in the corporate sector in the 1990s and gained traction in the 2000s with input from researchers such as T. Hug, N. Friesen, F. Scherer, M. Scherer and others [16]. A guidebook on microlearning in corporate training was written by K. Kapp and R. Defelice [18]. Additionally, many studies continue to be conducted on the effect of microlearning on different student groups, such as pharmacy students [8] or computer engineers [11].

The use of microlearning in language education is still a relatively new phenomenon. Currently, there is no universally accepted methodology for integrating microlearning into language teaching. In order to better understand how microlearning could be incorporated into the modern language education model, we must first examine the development of methodological thinking in the field of foreign language teaching. For this purpose, we are surveying existing literature, exploring the evolution of methodology in Russian universities [21], during the Soviet period [26], and the general overview of its development in Russia [24] and carrying out our own deep dive into the matter. By analysing the progression of methodology, we can determine the role of microlearning in the existing system, identify methodologies with features similar to microlearning, and gain an understanding of how microlearning has been applied in language learning and teaching so far.

Thus, the aim of our study is to conduct a historiographic analysis of the development of methodological thinking in language education in Russia and Western countries with a specific focus on the Russian context. Through the review of scientific and professional literature, we gained insights into the progression of methodology in general, identified current trends in language education, and evaluated the extent to which microlearning or any of its components has been integrated as a teaching tool in language education.

The aim was achieved through the application of research methods, including literature review, comparative historical and chronological methods, synthesis, systematisation, and generalisation of theoretical data.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The object of the research is the evolution of foreign language teaching methodology. The subject of the study is microlearning as a teaching tool in the context of language education. The research methodology employed fundamental documents, including recommendations addressed to the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO); the Federal law 'About Education in Russian Federation' of 29 December 2012, № 273-FL; scientific and methodological articles from periodicals devoted to the field of study (International Review of Education, Journal of the Learning Sciences, Studies in Second Language Acquisition, Language Teaching Research, Modern Language Journal, Journal of Language and Education, Pedagogical Journal), foreign language teaching handbooks by prominent methodologists (Lewis, Thornbury, Meddings, Kitaygorodskaya, Kuklina, Mirolyubov, Shchukin, Skripnikova, Solovova, Tatarinova, Tatarnitseva) and manuscripts of Russian and foreign authors on the research problem (Hug, Kapp, Knowles, Lado, Passov, Zmeyev).

The study employed both chronological and comparative historical methods to investigate the evolution of foreign language teaching methodology. By arranging the events in chronological order, researchers were able to demonstrate the history of the subject through a sequential order. The comparative historical method was also utilised for examining the main historical changes in the field of language education by making direct comparisons to other important historical events in the field under research while also considering the present-day implications.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are several theories describing evolution and genesis of teaching methods and approaches related to foreign language education both in Russia and other former Soviet countries. Russian researchers such as D.V. Burimskaya, A.A. Mirolyubov, E.N. Solovova, and A.N. Shchukin have offered different perspectives on this subject (Table 1) [17]. However, none of these theories provide a complete model, as each was developed with distinct scientific goals in mind. Furthermore, S. S. Kuklina and M. N. Tatarinova [22] note there is still much to be done in terms of fully documenting the development of the Russian foreign language teaching methodology after 1917 is not yet complete. As a result, there is no consensus on the number of stages and the understanding of their content.

As stated by E.V. Yakovlev and N.O. Yakovleva [44, p. 6], the process of developing a scientific problem typically includes several stages. According to the authors, in the initial phase, the phenomenon being studied is not perceived as an object of cognitive inquiry. In the second stage, researchers delve into a more thorough exploration of the object's unique attributes that can help them form preliminary scientific hypotheses and theories. As the object reaches the third stage, is deemed fully researched and validated.

Our historiographic analysis focuses on the second stage of development, where foreign language teaching methodology is a subject of systematic investigation with its elements

and aspects being explored. That being said, we cannot yet claim that the problem has been fully studied for several reasons. Firstly, several methodological aspects are still lacking significant research. Secondly, the rapid growth of new teaching approaches and methods necessitates closer scientific scrutiny.

Table 1

Approaches to the periodisation of the evolution of teaching methods in language education in Russia and former Soviet countries

Authors of the staging theories	Stages of development of Russian foreign language teaching methodology
D.V. Burimskaya	1) Russian stage: XVII – 1917; 2) Soviet stage: 1918 (formation of the USSR) – 1991 (collapse of the USSR) 3) Current stage: 1991 (formation of the Russian Federation) – present day
A.A. Mirolyubov	1) 1860-1917; 2) 1917-1930; 3) 1930-1941; 4) 1940-50s XX century; 5) 1960s XX century; 6) 1970-80s XX century;
E.N. Solovova	1) 1924-1930; 2) 1931-1944; 3) 1944-1961; 4) 1861-1980; 5) the end of the 1990s – present day;
A.N. Shchukin	I) pre-revolutionary period II) post-revolutionary period: 1) 1917-1939; 2) 1940-1959; 3) 1960-1969; 4) 1970-1979; 5) 1980-1989; 6) 1990-1999

Table 1 Adapted from 'Kniga I. A. Gruzinskoj "Metodika prepodavanija anglijskogo jazyka v srednej shkole": otrazhenie rannego sovetskogo perioda razvitija otechestvennoj metodiki' ['Methods of teaching English in secondary school by I. A. Gruzinskaya: reflection of the early soviet period of the national methodological science development'], by O. N. Igna, 2019, Pedagogical Review, 2(24), p. 190-199 (doi:10.23951/2307-6127-2019-2-190-199). Copyright 2019 by Tomsk State Pedagogical University.

In historiographic research, it is crucial to establish temporal boundaries to identify key stages in the evolution of the studied phenomenon. As explained by E.V. Yakovlev and N.O. Yakovleva [44, pp. 5-6], one approach to defining these boundaries is by analysing four preconditions that reflect the process of the phenomenon's development. These preconditions include: basic characteristics of socio-economic conditions, social demand for solutions to a specific problem, results of theoretical research on the problem, and methods for solving the problem in pedagogical practice.

The investigation of the social-economic situation in Russia over the last century and a half has allowed us to distinguish three main stages of development for foreign language teaching methodology. The social demand for solutions is closely linked to socio-economic conditions, so each stage in our research represents a particular society's demand, along with the pedagogical problems that needed to be addressed using relevant methodological tools.

Thus, let us have a more precise look at the time boundaries of each chronological period:

1. The timeframe of the 1920s to 1950s of the 20th century is particularly characterised by the absence of theoretical foundation in methodological field and increasing need for new methodological approaches in foreign language teaching.
2. The second timeframe, spanning from the late 1950s to the 1980s, is marked by the accumulation and systematisation of knowledge acquired from previous scholarship, as well as an increased emphasis on international experience and the establishment of initial teaching techniques and principles for foreign-language education.

3. The third timeframe, which spans the mid-1990s to the present day, demonstrates how the pace of research in language education is gaining momentum, resulting in the emergence of new methodological issues and barriers that require attention.

The available sources on the pre-revolutionary period seem to suggest that the issue of teaching methods did not garner as much attention at that time as it did in later periods. According to A. N. Shchukin [35, pp. 313-317], this time period can be subdivided into two stages. The first stage spans from the Christianisation of Rus to the reforms implemented by Peter the Great in the 18th century. During this time, the use of foreign languages was limited and primarily included people studying them for religious purposes, such as translating sacred texts [24, p. 34].

According to A.N. Shchukin, during Peter the Great's reign, the attitude to foreign language learning changed dramatically. Foreign languages were of a paramount importance, especially in education and science. As A. N. Shchukin also notes, French was compulsorily studied in noble environments in the 18th and 19th centuries. This period gives rise to first attempts of developing methodological basis of teaching foreign languages, and consciousness-raising method, in particular. This method's main principle is drawing learners' attention to the properties of the target language and engaging their noticing and comparing during the process of learning [35, p. 317].

First stage (1920-1950s of the 20th century)

From a socioeconomic perspective, Russia's situation during this time was characterised by significant change, with reforms affecting all areas of society. Consequently, the pre-revolutionary heritage, including pedagogical practices, was considered outdated and reactionary, and a course was set towards a complete transformation of all aspects of science, including education.

Notably, in the early years of Soviet rule, there was a noticeable lack of social demand for pedagogical studies in the area of foreign language education. This was primarily due to the international isolation of the country. However, the first steps towards development in this area were taken when N. K. Krupskaya emphasized the paramount significance of language education both for science and the broader socio-cultural context [26, p. 621-622].

After the inception of foreign language instruction in the education system in 1925, educational institutions in Russia started implementing more extensive foreign language learning for students, as well as a concentration on specialization. This led to a considerable amplification in the amount of time allocated to foreign language education [17, p. 194]. In addition to these practical benefits, A.A. Mirolyubov also posited that foreign language learning could help raise the country's overall literacy rate and thus become a distinguishing characteristic of Russian education as a whole [29].

Consequently, during the 1920s-1940s, sociopedagogical and cognitive principles dominated foreign language teaching. The notion consciousness-comparative approach is predominantly used in Soviet pedagogical discourse in this period of time [35]. This shift appears to have been heavily influenced by Marxist beliefs and theories about the material basis of cognition. Studies of the foreign language teaching method drew on the work of scholars like K. D. Ushinsky, N. G. Chernishevsky, N. A. Dobrolyubov, and I. M. Sechenov [21, p. 76), who advocated for a materialist view of cognition that emphasised the relationship between speech and thinking, and the connection between words and concepts, following the role of speech in shaping one's consciousness. Additionally, these early researchers believed that a person's cognitive abilities were ultimately influenced by their level of consciousness.

L. V. Shcherba, who is considered the founder of this approach, presented a thorough linguistic framework for the method in his book on foreign language learning. In it, he provides detailed instructions on how to work with texts efficiently by applying both the grammar and vocabulary of the foreign language and the learner's mother tongue. The fundamental principle underlying this approach is the comprehension of language rules rather than mere rote work on skills, or, as it is phrased, conscious language acquisition [21, p. 76].

During the early 20th century, notable researchers such as L. V. Shcherba, K. A. Ganshina, I. A. Gruzinskaya, and A. A. Lyubarskaya led methodological studies in the education of languages [26]. Despite the fact that the pedagogy of this period has been found to seek consciousness-raising, the most frequently used methods generally included those of direct and grammar-translation ones.

Furthermore, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there was a commonly held belief that receptive language skills were fundamentally more important than productive ones. This perspective stemmed from the opinion that students could not acquire all the necessary language skills through the formal schooling available at the time. L. V. Shcherba emphasised that the primary objective of foreign language instruction was to cultivate students into thoughtful readers, as knowledge of a foreign language allows them to develop skills in careful analysis of text [26, p. 623].

Naturally, even then, L. V. Shcherba was able to devise an excellent framework for categorising language ability. His system comprised the following requirements: mastering and using simple expressions, maintaining conversational discourse, possessing excellent oral language skills, and demonstrating proficiency in handling textual materials and reference books [21]. The author's categorisation also encompasses comprehension of scientific articles and professional literature, understanding and translating any kind of book, basic proficiency in written language, and advanced proficiency in written language. As such, despite the fact that most Soviet language methodologies at that time focused heavily on receptive skills development, some methodological studies attempted to encourage the acquisition of productive skills as well.

Returning to the question of methodological approaches used at that period of time, grammar-translation method widely regarded as one the most applied ones. Although it has undergone several changes in recent years, it still remains relevant. During the same time period, Western methodologists favoured the direct method of teaching, which involves the elimination of utilising the native language in language learning. This approach had also been used for long by soviet foreign language teachers.

Nevertheless, the direct method's implementation in Soviet language instruction was limited by the differences between Russian and Western European languages. As a result, implementation of the native language in language learning became a more widely accepted practice within the Russian context. In the 1930s, there was a shift toward implementing a mixed approach to teaching, whereby language learners underwent an early stage basic speaking course to provide a foundation for language abilities, followed by subsequent stages involving a blend of grammar-translation techniques and text-based learning activities aided by the use of the learners' native language [24].

Summing up the work of methodologists of the 1920-1940s, we managed to come to several important conclusions, which affected the soviet foreign language methodology in general. Firstly, foreign language was firmly entrenched in the Soviet school curriculum. Secondly, from the methodological point of view, combined with the consciousness-comparative approach, the mixed method has been found to be the most efficient one due

to it combining the direct and grammar-translation approaches, which are argued to be the foundation of the Russian foreign language teaching methodology so far [36]. Moreover, psychological approaches based on theories of speech production and perception, as well as mental and mnemonic activity, were implemented in addition to the existing methodology.

In spite of the significant contributions made by Soviet methodology studies between the 1920s and 1940s, the methods described do not align with contemporary language teaching approaches. Additionally, the research conducted suggests that the investigated methodologies lacked cohesion, and were limited in their application due to their unidirectional and inflexible nature.

Second stage (the end of the 1950s – 1980s of the 20th century)

The second period provided greater opportunities for growth in Soviet language education. Furthermore, we see a change in the nation's political trajectory, which led to overall societal and economic shifts.

During the period of 'thaw' in the Soviet Union, new challenges emerged in science and scientific research, resulting in a greater focus on practical aspects of learning in all areas, including foreign language instruction. The Council of Ministers' Resolution of May 25, 1961, proclaimed the start of a new direction in language education with a shift towards a more pragmatic approach. This shift towards practical methods gradually changed Soviet methodological approaches and teaching techniques to reflect consciousness-practical approaches [21]. Additionally, the importance of a high level of foreign language proficiency increased considerably during this period due to the growing demand for occupations that required this skill [24].

Thus, the trajectory of development within methodological science was mainly shaped by the historical decisions made by the Soviet Communist Party at the XXV in the year 1976 [31], XXVI in the year 1981, XXVII in the year 1986 party congresses [21]. As a result, specific objectives were formulated, which in turn determined how the foreign language teaching methodology was going to evolve in that period. These included:

- practical foreign language learning, emphasising oral and written proficiency with an emphasis on effective communication and the exchange of information;
- foreign language training to expand students' mental and cultural boundaries and enhance their cultural awareness, fostering a deeper understanding of cultures and languages around us;
- moral and ideological-political upbringing of students within the process of foreign language learning.

During this time, the Audio-lingual Method, which was developed by such researchers as the American linguist Charles Fries and methodologist Robert Lado at the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s, gained significant attention [23]. The method was quickly adopted in the USSR in the 1970s.

This method focuses on enhancing students' linguistic abilities in the foreign language by utilising it exclusively within the classroom environment. One of the key features of the Audio-lingual Method is its focus on grammar instruction through the use of patterns or grammatical structures. These patterns are conveyed to students and then reinforced through systematic and mechanical exercises, or drills.

This approach aims to help students understand and internalise the grammatical structures of the target language, making it easier for them to communicate. This emphasis on pattern-based grammar instruction and drill exercises has been found to be particularly

effective in helping students improve their comprehension and conversational skills, as they become more comfortable using the language in a real-world setting. The Audio-lingual Method's approach to grammar instruction, by emphasising patterns and drilling exercises, sets it apart from other foreign language teaching methods and has likely contributed to its success and popularity in the Soviet Union in the 1970s.

We are particularly interested in this approach as it shares some similarities with microlearning, which is a learning approach that focuses on delivering smaller, more focused learning experiences to learners. Let us have a closer look at these similarities.

Firstly, compared to earlier teaching approaches, the Audio-lingual Method appears to be more systematically structured. At its core, the method focuses on selecting relevant learning content. Thus, while working with receptive skills the mostly used constructions are chosen. At the same time, when it comes to productive skills, we choose units having a high degree of use and typicality.

In the Audio-lingual Method, when teaching receptive skills, the most commonly used grammar constructions are typically selected. This helps students to quickly understand and internalise the language's grammar structures, which can improve their comprehension skills.

When it comes to productive skills like speaking and writing, the method uses units that have a high degree of use and typicality in daily life. This means that students are learning language expressions that are most likely to come up in real-world situations, further enhancing their ability to communicate effectively in the target language.

According to the second principle, the amount of learning material conveyed to students is typically limited. For instance, just one target sentence is generally chosen for students to focus on and learn at a time.

Thirdly, while the fundamental principle of the Audio-lingual Approach is learning a set of fixed structures by heart, the learning method also includes a focus on multiple repetitions of what has been previously learned to prepare students to use this content in real-life situations.

In the 1950s, similar methods to learn foreign language grammar started to emerge in the USSR, specifically with Russian methodologists developing active methods. One such approach, the structure-functional method, was developed by A. P. Starkov, I. W. Slobodchikov, and A. P. Shapko, and relies on the use of model phrases. These phrases reflect common grammatical and semantical structures, as well as phonetic characteristics [38]. The structure-functional method, much like the Audio-lingual Approach, shares some characteristics with microlearning, such as its fixed learning content and limited amount.

As the development of new methodological forms continued, another important basic principle of personally-oriented education took shape. The ideas of influential western researchers, such as L. S. Vygotsky, A. N. Leontyev, I. A. Zimnyaya, and S. L. Rubinstein, were inherited and further developed by scientists all over the globe [21].

These researchers have contributed to our understanding of personally-oriented education, emphasising the importance of acknowledging and honoring the unique differences in learning and tailoring educational experiences to meet the distinct needs and interests of each student. The method also involves solving communicative tasks, but the unique aspect of it is that it fosters a partnership between the student and the teacher.

The Consciousness-Practical Approach, developed by B. V. Belyayev in the 1950s, is a method that should not be overlooked [26]. Its main objective is to improve students' speaking skills, utilising only the target language. Despite facing obstacles in explaining grammatical concepts in the target language, its main ideas provided the foundation for the

Activity approach in language teaching. This method seeks to separate the skills of listening, speaking, and writing, and to further improve them through a process of focused practice.

One of the most significant shifts in language teaching in the 20th century was the emergence of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach. This approach and the System-Active Approach developed almost simultaneously in the West and the Soviet Union, respectively. The Communicative Approach, developed at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge in Great Britain, draws from the theory of Behaviorism. In Russia, a similar approach, suggested by E.I. Passov and his students, stressed the importance of teaching students to communicate and express themselves in the target language, rather than solely focusing on grammar and other academic elements [32].

Passov's approach, primarily focused on developing oral communication skills and overcoming psychological barriers during communication in a foreign language, relies on the principles of personal involvement, situational context, motivation, and functionality [32]. According to the founders of this approach, these principles are rooted in the laws of verbal communication. The fourth principle, functionality, refers to the selection of language content that contributes to transforming language into speech.

The Communicative Approach is currently regarded as one the most broadly applied methods in the sector of foreign language teaching, with a range of up-and-coming methodologies, such as microlearning, drawing inspiration from its core principles. The primary goal of all modern methodologies is to promote students' oral communication skills to increase their language fluency and problem-solving abilities in real-world situations.

We should not overlook the significant contribution of G. A. Kitaygorodskaya, who developed a method of awakening the latent potential of a student or a group of students. The crux of this approach is to enhance foreign language learning by integrating components of the Communicative Approach while incorporating emotional elements. Furthermore, as social interaction between individuals is the foundation of this method, it is often accomplished by simulating real-life scenarios, events, and contexts that promote natural communication [19].

While developing the method, G. A. Kitaygorodskaya incorporated key psycho-pedagogical principles, such as the use of games and role play to organize the learning material and process. These games, tailored to students' language ability and intelligence, stimulate various communicative situations while maintaining a high level of motivation and engagement. Additionally, the technique of developing speaking skills through multiple repetitions of selected language units aligns with the principles of microlearning.

As we can see, the domain of language education had been revolutionised by the development of new principles and approaches in this period of time. One more well-known example is the Lexical Approach.

The Lexical Approach, also known as the traditional approach, is a method of language learning that places emphasis on the acquisition of vocabulary and grammar. This approach was developed and popularised by Michael Lewis. This approach emphasises the importance of building students' grammatical and lexical knowledge, with a focus on the acquisition of target-language words and their meanings, or 'chunks', which is also applied in microlearning [25].

The era of foreign language teaching is considered to have witnessed significant progress, where the primary focus shifted from receptive to productive skills. The information presented above highlighted the fact that the work of Soviet and Western methodologists served as the foundation for modern methods and approaches employed in today's foreign language education.

The key methods that shaped contemporary foreign language teaching methodologies are the Audio-lingual Approach, which focuses on grammar instruction, and the Communicative Approach, which emphasises language-learning activities. It is apparent that these principles formed the foundation for cutting-edge methods like microlearning, which aim to overcome current challenges and solve novel issues.

Third stage (middle 1990s – present day)

The period spanning from the late 1980s to the early 1990s witnessed significant changes in the economic and social fabric of the Soviet Union. These global shifts motivated people to enroll in foreign language courses with a focus on business communication. At that time, the focus was primarily on enhancing specialised professional reading skills, accompanied by improvements in other areas such as listening, speaking, and writing. As a result, foreign language teaching methodologies became more oriented towards fostering all four language skills.

Following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, a drastic change in educational perspectives, including foreign language teaching, had taken place, resulting in adjustments to the responsibilities of teachers. Teachers were now required to focus more on ensuring effective communication among students and managing the learning process.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, several prominent Russian researchers, including I. L. Bim, S. F. Shatilov, R. K. Minyar-Beloruchev, S. V. Chernyshev, and I. A. Zimnyaya, provided significant inputs to the development of Russian teaching methodology [26]. The works of previous scholars in the field laid the foundation for the teaching methods and approaches of today that integrated their knowledge with a practical understanding of the current reality, including its challenges, opportunities, and limitations.

Thus, of particular interest are problem-based learning, and development-based teaching [40]. In problem-based learning, students are presented with a problem that is relevant to their lives, encouraging them to apply their knowledge and critical thinking skills to develop solutions. In development-based teaching, students are given opportunities to practice these skills in relevant contexts, with guidance and feedback for improvement. Developmental-based teaching can incorporate a variety of approaches, including project-based learning, service learning, and inquiry-based learning.

One more important method in language instruction is the Dogme Approach which is now considered to be one that takes into account all the current educational trends. This approach is a method of language teaching and learning developed in response to the limitations of the most commonly used approach, the Communicative Method. The Dogme language teaching was popularised by Scott Thornbury in the 2000s [41]. This method acknowledges that language learning is a natural process that is shaped by the environment and focuses on providing students with meaningful and authentic language experiences. Dogme teachers emphasise the importance of communication as well as the use of context and cultural information in language learning. To echo Q. N. Nguyen and B. P. Hung's views, Dogme ELT offers teachers the opportunity to tailor classroom practices to meet the diverse needs and interests of their students. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, it addresses an important concern in foreign language methodology [30].

It's also noteworthy that modern foreign language teaching is deeply influenced by psychology and neurophysiology, as these scientific areas provide methodology specialists with valuable insights into how language is acquired, how memory functions, how to foster students' motivation and how to personalise education process in general. The concept of

personalised learning has been extensively explored by E. F. Zeer in his works on neurodidactics, where the author emphasises the importance of understanding the higher mental functions of the brain in order to create customised educational experiences for each learner [45].

In summary, modern foreign language teaching methods are now blending and being holistically used depending on the students' own needs and requirements, providing teachers with enough freedom to design the learning process variously and situationally. This holistic approach allows for personalised learning opportunities and a more effective learning experience for all students.

Addressing leading modern language teaching authorities, T. I. Skripnikova was able to classify the current foreign language teaching methodologies as communication-oriented structure-functional method or personal-activity communicative method [37]. This includes a functional focus and an emphasis on acquiring productive skills, as well as a personal or group-based approach that takes into consideration the individual or group's unique strengths and needs.

RESULTS

The analysis conducted in our research enabled us to conclude that the first two stages of methodological development established the bedrock for further advancements in the domain of language education. The second stage started a new era of methodological thinking, when the basics of currently utilised teaching methodologies were developed. The first significant breakthrough was demonstrated with the development of the Audio-lingual Method, which emphasised the importance of developing productive skills rather than just receptive ones. This was followed by the emergence of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach and the Lexical Approach, which remain the most widely recognised ones today. Moreover, the Communicative Approach has deeply ingrained itself in all modern language teaching methods. This period of methodological development laid the foundations of language education in general and can be characterised by the prosperity of new ideas in both Russia and Western countries.

The third stage saw a significant increase in the demand for innovative approaches to solving emerging challenges, leading to a diverse range of methodology offerings. The process of new method formation is primarily driven by the integration of domestic and foreign experiences. Starting with a shift towards new learning objectives such as language education for business, the development of methodological thinking uncovered new areas and concerns that needed to be addressed. This process can be exemplified by emerging methods such as problem-based learning and development-based teaching, alongside brand-new Dogme ELT. Student-centered and personalisation-oriented approaches drew scholars' attention to the field of neurostudies. Currently, neurodidactics presents a vast potential for future research to understand how the human brain functions and how human brain activity correlates with our learning abilities.

There is no unified answer to the question of how modern language teaching methodology can be named, as we are currently living in the epoch of new emerging teaching approaches in language education, on the one hand, and constantly altering and replenishing social demand, on the other. So, the best answer here would be that the most preferable approach to teaching is a mixed one, which can provide language instructors with enough freedom and flexibility, fostering the effectiveness of learning process.

Based on our detailed research into the history of foreign language teaching methodology, we have arrived at several key takeaways:

1. The methodology has undergone several significant stages of evolution, with each stage building upon the experience and insights of the previous one.
2. The subject is characterised by careful inheritance of past experience: the tradition of drawing on past experience while also critically reexamining and reinterpreting it.
3. The development of socio-economic environment has led to changes in the social demands for foreign language teaching at different stages, necessitating a reevaluation of the methodology.
4. A singular, globally adopted approach to teaching foreign language does not exist. Instead, the existing approaches are combined, integrated, and applied in intricate ways, while also being open to and inspired by novel methods and avenues of foreign language instruction, as well as related fields of study.
5. The current teaching methodologies are characterised by a set of common features, including personalised and communication-based approaches to learning, a focus on developing productive skills, a student-centered approach, relevant learning material and a neurodidactical component.
6. The historiographic analysis revealed that microlearning has not yet been officially utilised as a foreign language teaching method, although it does exhibit parallels with other contemporary teaching methodologies.

Microlearning and foreign language teaching methodology

By analysing the popular methodologies applied in methodological circles, we attempted to determine the foundations of the micro approach and identify the point in time when the need for such an approach emerged. During the historiographic analysis, we found that microlearning has not been established as an independent method in language education so far, despite the fact that it emerged several decades ago, in the 1990s, in the field of corporate training. Microlearning gained its popularity in corporate education, because it constituted a unique approach to teaching that is dissimilar from other established methodologies. This is due to several reasons. On one hand, the microlearning method encompasses certain principles that are commonly employed in contemporary teaching practices. On the other hand, specific focus is placed on adult neurophysiology, which is not unique to prevailing methodologies. That is why microlearning presents of vast potential for language methodological research.

In the context of language education, the development of the Audio-lingual Method and the Lexical Approach in the middle of the last century brought to light a key principle on which the entire micro approach is founded, namely, a clear limitation of educational content. The Audio-lingual Approach exemplifies this modularity through a specific number of language units that have a high degree of practical application and require memorisation through multiple repetitions. The Lexical Approach follows a similar principle, albeit with a more communication-oriented and student-centric approach, suggesting learners to learn prepared 'chunks.' Therefore, it can be said that microlearning resonates with these two methods, which demonstrate that language methodologists have always aimed to find more efficient methods for working with human cognitive abilities in order to enhance their memorisation skills.

As can be seen from these examples, the idea of 'micro' has been entrenched in language learning for a long time, despite the fact that it has yet to gain its own niche in foreign

language teaching terminology. The core concept of microlearning is to enhance the ability of a student to work with attention and focus while learning, which should result in better acquisition of new material. All modern methodologies more or less align with this idea, but microlearning is the only one that has it central. This fact prompts us to assume that microlearning will soon find its own place in the field of language education.

Current trends in the field of language education

New pedagogic methodologies, like microlearning, are gaining momentum in today's rapidly evolving world. Let us delve into the dynamics driving this growing need and analyse the factors behind the increasing popularity of the idea of 'micro' in the field of education.

Expansion of the concept of 'student'. Today, education has become crucial in people's lives, irrespective of whether they are enrolled in formal educational institutions or pursuing lifelong learning. Consequently, the concept of 'student' has expanded to encompass a broader spectrum of individuals. In terms of the modern adult learner, their profile can differ greatly from the traditional conception of a student.

Many scholars have aimed to find better ways of teaching adults. R. Boelens et al. investigated the use of conjecture mapping to improve learning outcomes for adult learners with a vocational educational background [3]. I. Salifu and I. K. Biney explored strategies that teachers can use to enhance adult learner motivation in distance learning programs [33]. Within the paradigm of lifelong learning, A. Amponsah underlines the importance of distinguishing between young and adult learning, providing an overview of adults' learning styles [2]. It is evident that there is a growing societal demand for approaches suited exclusively to adult learners.

Apart from that, andragogy experts have provided data on the psychological and neurophysiological differences that modern adult learners possess, including challenges with focusing, retaining, and recalling new information as well as emotional aspect. As I. Lucas-Oliva et al. point out, novel neuroscientific advances uncover how language learning functions at the neural level [27]. These studies contribute to transforming modern pedagogical approaches in order to achieve better learning outcomes.

The character of the epoch. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 a number of new teaching trends gained significant attention among scholars worldwide. Those include distance learning, IT technologies in education, new methodological and non-methodological aspects of learning and teaching. For the most part, these trends are no longer considered new, rather they have become an essential part of our reality. In 2020, the publishing house Elsevier announced a new initiative to create a resource center for research addressing problems related to the novel coronavirus. Studies related to COVID-19 also address the new challenges that learners and teachers faced. For instance, researchers come to think of learners' coping strategies needed to deal with stress and anxiety in the classroom, as described in the paper by P. D. MacIntyre, T. Gregerson, and S. Mercer [28]. This is an illustrative example of non-methodological aspects in teaching.

One of the challenges also relevant for our study is the constant information flow which affects human behaviour and ability to learn. In today's world of hyper-connectivity and information overload, individuals face a daunting task of sifting through a vast array of educational resources. While this abundance of information can be beneficial, it also creates challenges in identifying the most relevant and valuable content. As demonstrated by M. Gusenbauer's research, the overwhelming abundance of scholarly information is causing researchers to devote more time and effort to identify relevant data and information [15].

As K. Caldwell points out, adding to the complexity is the constant bombardment of information, making it challenging to separate the signal from the noise. As a result, we are increasingly faced with the need to learn how to limit the amount of incoming content and how to distinguish its most important parts, particularly in the process of learning [5].

The factors outlined above have encouraged many teachers to explore new methods and approaches for language teaching, especially when working with adult learners. This requires a teaching approach that incorporates the principles of andragogy, rather than traditional pedagogy. M. S. Knowles first pioneered with the concept of andragogy in 1970s, making it one of the most influential approaches in teaching, which changed the understanding of how adult learners should be taught [20]. Currently, many scholars apply to this concept. For instance, in her research K. Caldwell has come up with a teaching model based on the andragogy principles which mostly takes into account students' experiences and promotes meaningful learning [5]. This model also addresses issues with attention, concentration, and focus, which learners frequently face nowadays.

These features align with the principles of microlearning, making it a more effective and efficient method for modern-day language education. Microlearning incorporates modularity, limiting, flexibility, accessibility, and personalisation, which are effective and efficient components for successful teaching and learning in the modern world.

As such, we can conclude that foreign language teaching methodology is currently developing in proliferating manner and requires continuous improvement and development. Our analysis has unveiled potential development pathways for contemporary methodological thought and has highlighted the increasing need for innovative and topical solutions in the modern era. Thus, microlearning presents a vast potential for research and investigation, especially in foreign language teaching, as it has been identified as an understudied area requiring further theoretical and practical investigation. This is why it is crucial to continue exploring both the potential and challenges associated with incorporating microlearning into foreign language teaching practices.

DISCUSSION

One topic worthy of discussion in the field of foreign language teaching is the issue of how best to classify the methodological developments that have shaped the field over time. Debates among scholars continue to revolve around the question of periodisation, or how to chronologically arrange the various approaches that have been developed over the years. Researchers have proposed their own chronological frameworks, and the challenges facing language educators in the present day have only compounded the complexity of the issue.

Despite these dilemmas, our historiographic analysis has allowed us to revisit past experiences and engage with the ongoing processes that are shaping the current era of methodological thinking. In doing so, we have managed to identify significant trends in language education today and have developed a view of periodisation that accounts for these changes. It is crucial to take into account modern trends in language education, especially as they relate to novel methods such as microlearning, in order to determine the most effective approaches for teaching foreign languages.

During our study we came up to the conclusion that the problem of non-methodological aspects in teaching has been gaining traction for the last decade. Currently, the trend has

been widely discussed from different perspectives which can be proved by some research examples. For instance, we agree with the view of M. Driver, who states in her article the significant influence of negative emotions on students' ability to learn which can be alleviated with the help of coping strategies utilised to address discomfort and trauma. Driver's work emphasises the challenges teachers face when dealing with students' complex emotional states, including navigating trauma and distress, and offers practical guidance for promoting emotional well-being in the classroom [12].

The need of taking into account non-methodological components is profoundly studied by J.-M. Dewaele et al., who examined the emotional aspects of students, including anxiety, enjoyment and motivation, in combination with three specific teacher strategies: two methodological and one non-methodological. The researchers aimed to uncover the relationship between these emotional factors and the instructors' teaching behaviors. The results indicated a positive correlation between these teacher strategies and students' levels of enjoyment and motivation [10]. Additionally, the importance of teacher support for facilitating students' success in the classroom was analysed by J. van de Pol et al., who explored its dynamics and positive effect which it has on learners [43].

The collected data in our research illustrate the tendency of shifting from teacher-centered to student-centered learning. As can be seen, all modern teaching approaches including Dogme ELT, problem-based teaching or novel microlearning cannot be utilised without paying attention to the unique needs and interests of each individual student. As S. M. Alshraah et al. point out in their research, 'educators should be equipped with learner-oriented methodologies which would help them to navigate the changing demands of language learners' [1].

As following, we see vast potential in the field of andragogy, which explores teaching methods for adults as a response to the increasing societal demand for teaching methods that take into account adult neurophysiology. Our view aligns with that of S. I. Zmeyev, who has highlighted that adults learn differently compared to children, and andragogy encompasses a range of methodologies, including those that focus on non-methodological issues in adult learning [46]. The differences in motivational, cognitive, and social aspects are undeniable and must not be overlooked when working with different age groups. As C. L. Caldwell-Harris and B. MacWHinney's stated, these factors change throughout human lifespan and influence the way adult people learn [4].

The concept of microlearning, an emerging phenomenon in teaching, has gained traction in recent years, particularly in the field of andragogy. This method's effectiveness lies in utilising cognitive principles and the ability to facilitate learning through brief, focused sessions. The significance of microlearning techniques and practices stated in this article is reinforced by a neurophysiological perspective in the research by F. Scherer and M. Scherer that conducted a detailed analysis of how our brain functions when we perceive and memorise information [34]. These results validate the effectiveness of implementing microlearning when fostering adults' memorability, attention, concentration and focus. As G. Sulis's research showed, the students' engagement was much more sustainable when teacher provided more short and various tasks and proximal goals to achieve [39].

Despite the availability of significant scientific data surrounding the research topic, we encountered some limitations during the historiographical analysis. We found it challenging to locate adequate research addressing the practical implementation of microlearning in the domain of foreign language education. The most prominent proponents of the method, such as Theo Hug, F. Scherer, M. Scherer, and others,

successfully developed the concept in the field of corporate training. In addition, C. Y. Choo and A. S. A. Rahim found that microlearning was just as effective as face-to-face active learning in an experiment conducted with first-year pharmacy students during the COVID-19 pandemic [8]. Similar results were achieved in a special course designed in a microformat for students studying the Theory of Computation [11]. However, Western and Russian scholars have yet to address it in language education.

Another limitation we came across in our study is the lack of specialised literature on microlearning in the context of teaching foreign languages. As such, we needed to broaden our research scope to include a larger range of methodologies for teaching foreign languages in order to investigate the current state of methodological thought and identify the key approaches that have had the greatest impact on current teaching practices. This choice was informed by our goal of highlighting the rapid and global evolution of methodological thinking, as well as our desire to focus on the selected methodologies in order to reveal the presence or absence of methodological features that are unique to microlearning.

In terms of future vectors for development in microlearning research, we believe that it is important to synthesise and organise all existing scientific material dedicated to this topic. Such a systematic approach would allow for a greater understanding of how this methodology functions in practice. Additionally, more research is still needed on microlearning's application in a subject orientation. Many existing studies describe the method in general and provide its basic characteristics, but few go into depth about its specific applications. Likewise, many studies have viewed microlearning as a tool solely for digital learning, thus limiting its scope to mobile applications and digital platforms. However, microlearning can be implemented as a self-sufficient tool in a variety of contexts, including those that are not exclusively digital in nature. It can be observed that certain elements of microlearning have already been integrated into other broader methods, functioning independently of digital spaces.

CONCLUSION

Our research exploring the development of methodological thought both in Russia and other countries and its connection with the concept of microlearning adds valuable insights into the current state of teaching approaches in language education. Our analysis demonstrates that the history of methodology in Russia is characterised by a tradition of continuity, yet it remains receptive to new and innovative approaches, such as microlearning. We found that the development of microlearning is driven by changes in economic, political and social factors that have brought about a growing demand for innovative solutions to solve methodological problems and challenges. At the same time, microlearning is a relatively new concept in the area of language pedagogy and, consequently, lacks comprehensive scientific support. This presents a promising area for future exploration, as microlearning can be seen as a potential driver of new and exciting research.

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