

TEACHING RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TO BEGINNERS

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Abstract

This study investigates the learning experiences of beginner-level students of Russian as a foreign language (RFL) from Uzbek and Indian (English-speaking) backgrounds. Based on survey responses from 45 participants, the research explores key motivations, difficulties, preferred learning methods, and use of digital tools. The results reveal that while grammar is the most common challenge for both groups, learning preferences differ: Uzbek students benefit more from speaking and interaction, while Indian learners rely more on English-based support and structured digital tools. The findings provide insights into improving RFL instruction in multicultural classrooms.

Keywords: Russian as a foreign language, multilingual learners, Uzbek students, Indian students, teaching methods, language difficulties, motivation, digital tools, comparative education, foreign language acquisition

Introduction

In the modern globalized world, the Russian language continues to play an important role in education, international relations, and the labor market, especially in post-Soviet regions and countries with economic cooperation with Russia. As a result, the number of students learning Russian as a foreign language (RFL) is steadily increasing [4]. However, the effectiveness of teaching Russian varies depending on the learners' linguistic background, cultural context, and instructional strategies.

This study investigates the challenges and preferences of beginner-level students from two distinct groups — Uzbek and Indian (English-speaking) — studying Russian at the same institution. By comparing their learning motivations, difficulties, and preferences, this paper aims to provide practical recommendations for improving the RFL teaching process in multilingual classrooms [1].

Methodology

A survey was conducted among 45 students enrolled in beginner-level Russian language courses. The sample included both Uzbek-speaking and Indian (English-speaking) students. Participants were asked to complete a bilingual (Russian-English) Google Form, which included general information and 12 questions focused on motivation, difficulties, preferences, and digital tools. Responses were collected anonymously and analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively [5].



Results**Group Distribution**

According to the responses, approximately 60% of the participants belonged to the Uzbek group, and 40% to the Indian group.

Learning Motivation

The majority of students in both groups indicated that they study Russian:

For work or career opportunities (over 60%),

For personal interest or future studies (around 20%),

Other reasons included travel and communication with Russian-speaking friends.

Main Difficulties

Students reported challenges in the following areas (frequency based on free responses and keywords):

Grammar – most frequently mentioned difficulty,

Vocabulary and pronunciation – common among Indian students,

Speaking and listening – more common in Uzbek group.

Preferred Methods

When asked about what helps them learn better, students identified:

Games and dialogues as the most engaging tools,

Grammar exercises and videos as effective for memorizing structures,

Listening practice was valued across both groups.

Use of Digital Resources

The most used platforms were:

YouTube – for video lessons,

Duolingo and Google Translate – especially by Indian students,

Audio/video materials from the teacher – appreciated by Uzbek students.

Below are visual summaries based on the survey data:

Survey Results Summary



Group distribution shows that the majority of respondents are from the Uzbek group. The main motivation for learning Russian is career-related. Grammar was reported as the most difficult aspect, while games and dialogues are among the most preferred learning methods [3].

4. Discussion

The analysis reveals that while both Uzbek and Indian students face common difficulties such as grammar and vocabulary, their preferred learning strategies differ slightly due to language background. Uzbek students benefit more from speaking practice and live interaction, whereas Indian learners prefer structured explanations in English and digital tools [2].

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This comparative study highlights the need for adaptive and culturally aware RFL instruction. Based on student feedback, we recommend:

- Using multilingual support (especially English) for Indian learners;
- Incorporating interactive elements such as games and dialogues;
- Providing supplementary grammar support for both groups;
- Offering visual and audio materials tailored to each group's needs.

References

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