

Methodology for Teaching Phraseological Units in Russian as a Foreign Language

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Annotation: This article explores the methodology for teaching phraseological units of Russian to non-native speakers, focusing on their semantic, structural, and cultural characteristics. This study highlights the importance of integrating phraseological units into language learning curricula to develop communicative competence. A step-by-step approach is proposed, including classifying idioms, contextual exercises, and using multimedia tools. This research emphasises the role of cultural references and linguistic context in understanding and using phraseological units effectively. Practical examples and pedagogical recommendations are provided to enhance the teaching process.

Keywords: Phraseological units, teaching methodology, Russian as a foreign language, idioms, communicative competence, cultural context, multimedia tools.

Phraseological units or idiomatic expressions represent a significant layer of any language, reflecting their cultural and historical uniqueness. In Russian, PUs are not only essential for achieving linguistic fluency but also for understanding cultural nuances. Teaching these units to non-native speakers is challenging because of their figurative meanings, structural variety, and ambiguous usage. This article presents a comprehensive methodology for teaching Russian PUs to foreign learners, addressing the linguistic, cultural, and didactic aspects involved.

Phraseological units enrich language and serve as vital tools for achieving communicative competence. They:

➤ **Enhance expressiveness**

Idioms convey emotions and ideas vividly.

➤ **Bridge cultural understanding**

PUs reflect historical and cultural contexts.

➤ **Improve fluency**

Understanding idiomatic expressions enables learners to effectively participate in real-life communication.

However, the figurative nature of PUs poses difficulties for learners because their meanings often cannot be inferred directly from individual words.

The figurative meanings of PUs are not literal and often require cultural knowledge. PUs range from simple phrases to complex sentences. Their correct application depends heavily on the context, register, and style.

These challenges necessitate a structured teaching methodology that emphasises both linguistic and cultural aspects.

Phraseological units present significant challenges in language teaching due to their semantic complexity, structural variety, and contextual usage. A structured teaching methodology can effectively address these difficulties and enhance learners' mastery of these linguistic elements.

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The methodology for teaching phraseological units in Russian as a foreign language involves various approaches and techniques to help non-native speakers understand and use these complex linguistic structures effectively. Many methodologists believe that preparatory faculties do not adequately prepare students for understanding phraseological units (Kokova, 2019). This highlights the need for improved teaching methods, especially considering the difficulties foreign learners face when encountering Russian phraseology in real-life communicative situations (Chernova et al., 2021). To address this, researchers have developed scientifically grounded assignments and methodological systems for working with phraseological units (Chernova et al., 2021). Interestingly, there are contradictions in the approaches to teaching phraseology. While some focus on traditional methods, others emphasize innovative techniques. For instance, a multimodal textbook has been developed that incorporates visualization techniques and voice assistants to introduce and practice idioms (Mikheeva et al., 2019). This contrasts with more conventional approaches that rely on rote memorization. Additionally, the shadowing technique has shown promise in improving listening skills among students learning Russian as a foreign language (Shavtikova et al., 2023). In conclusion, the methodology for teaching phraseological units in Russian as a foreign language is evolving to meet the needs of modern learners. Effective approaches include the use of good educational materials (Aivazyán, 2015), contextual manuals with up-to-date pedagogical solutions (Prokofyeva et al., 2023), and innovative techniques such as visualization and technology-assisted learning (Mikheeva et al., 2019). The integration of linguistic and cultural aspects is crucial for developing students' intercultural communication skills (Murinova, 2022). Furthermore, a poly vector teaching module that considers different teaching stages and incorporates both online and offline components has been proposed to enhance the acquisition of phraseological units with verbs of motion (Dinevich et al., 2023).

The methodology is based on a three-phase approach:

1. Familiarization phase – introducing learners to the concept and importance of PUs. While the Familiarization Phase introduces learners to phraseological units (PUs) and their importance, providing definitions, examples, and visual aids to illustrate literal and figurative meanings, subsequent phases of the learning process likely focus on practical application, contextualized usage, and advanced analysis of PUs in various linguistic and cultural contexts. The Presentation Phase typically follows, where learners are exposed to PUs in authentic contexts, such as texts, dialogues, or multimedia resources, to observe their usage in real-life situations. This is often followed by a Practice Phase, which involves guided exercises and activities designed to help learners internalize the form, meaning, and use of the PUs through various tasks like gap-filling, matching, or role-playing. Finally, the Production Phase encourages learners to actively use the PUs in their communication, both in speaking and writing, to reinforce their understanding and promote long-term retention.

2. Practice Phase – developing learners' ability to recognise and interpret PUs in context.

Activities:

Contextual exercises provide sentences with missing PUs and ask learners to fill in the blanks.

Matching tasks – matching idioms with their meanings or equivalent expressions in the learner's native language.

Cultural analysis – discussing the origins and cultural significance of the selected PUs.

Integrating phrasal units (PUs) into various interactive and creative activities during the production phase suggests that learners may develop a more natural and fluent use of idiomatic expressions in spoken and written communication. This approach, combining role-playing, creative writing, and multimedia resources, implies that students will have multiple opportunities to practice and internalize PUs in diverse contexts, potentially leading to improved language proficiency and cultural understanding.



Examples of phraseological units in Russian

Вешать лапшу на уши

("To hang noodles on someone's ears") – to deceive or mislead.

Как две капли воды

("Like two drops of water") – to be identical.

Кот наплакал

("The cat cried") – a very small number.

For example, "вешать лапшу на уши" may confuse learners without an explanation of its cultural metaphor. Illustrations of literal meanings can spark discussions about figurative interpretation.

Understanding Russian phraseological units often requires knowledge of their cultural and historical references. For example:

За семь верст киселя хлебать

("To go seven versts to drink jelly") – refers to an outdated measure of distance and a traditional dish, highlighting historical elements of Russian life.

Teaching such expressions provides an opportunity to discuss Russian traditions and foster intercultural competence.

Teaching phraseological units in Russian requires a comprehensive approach that integrates linguistic, cultural, and practical dimensions. By adopting the proposed methodology, educators can help learners navigate the complexities of PUs, ultimately enhancing their communicative competence and cultural understanding. Future research should focus on developing digital resources for teaching PUs or exploring their acquisition in specific learner populations.

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