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Research article

## “Flipped class” technology in teaching foreign non-philological students

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**Abstract.** The article describes an adapted version of the innovative technology “flipped classroom,” which can be used in the practice of teaching Russian as a foreign language, especially in the context of distance learning. The relevance of the study lies in the need to create a methodology that meets the interests of the modern generation of students and is effective in the context of remote educational process. The purpose of the research is to describe the methodology for using the “flipped class” technology in a foreign language audience with the use of authentic Russian films – screen adaptations of literary works. To achieve this goal, analysis, systematization, generalization, description and other methods were used. The research materials were the feature film “It Can’t Be!” (directed by L. Gaidai, 1975), stories by M.M. Zoshchenko “Galosh,” “Funny Adventure,” “Wedding Accident,” the play “Crime and Punishment,” files with theoretical and regional information, a file with tasks, a questionnaire. The methodology has been successfully tested with foreign students of non-philological specialties. A hypothesis was put forward, the innovative technology “flipped classroom” was adapted to teaching Russian as foreign language in the context of distance learning, authentic films-adaptations of Russian artistic texts were selected, and a system of exercises was developed. An experiment was carried out, and then the hypothesis was corrected, taking into account the questionnaire survey and control testing of students. The main results of the study are that the use of the suggested methodology increases the efficiency of the educational process, motivation of foreign students to study the Russian language, literature, traditions of Russian native speakers, literacy of students and their linguistic and cultural competence. It also forms the ability of foreign students to self-study and self-organization, as well as to successfully conduct the educational process in a distance learning environment. The authors of the article consider it promising to use the “flipped classroom” technology in teaching Russian as a foreign language based on the material of linguocultural and regional studies, with the help of which students will be able to master educational information in accordance with different levels of language proficiency.

**Keywords:** innovative technology, “flipped classroom,” Russian as a foreign language, distance learning, authentic feature films, cultural linguistics, regional studies, grammar

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## Introduction

The modern educational paradigm involves integration of innovative technologies into educational process that helps to increase students' motivation and their learning efficiency. The “flipped class” is one of these technologies. It originated in the UK and was further developed in Harvard University (Mazur, 1997; Bergmann, Sams, 2012). It aroused interest among Russian researchers in the last decade. The “flipped class” technology is considered as one of the forms of “blended education.” It was adapted to teaching various academic disciplines, including Russian as a foreign language (RFL) and found its supporters and opponents. For example, the opponents rightfully stated that “foreign students come to Russia to immerse themselves into the language environment and communicate with native speakers instead of sitting at the computer” (Lebedeva, 2016). However, due to the current epidemiological situation in the world, the use of distance learning technologies has become the only way to organize the educational process. As practice shows, the modern generation of millennials turned out to be able to successfully perceive the distance educational process, which was previously suggested in scientific articles by Western scientists (Williams et al., 2018; Khonamri et al., 2020).

Therefore, the use of the “flipped class” technology at the lessons on Russian as a foreign language seems to be especially relevant to the authors. The exchange of methodological experience is useful for both methodologists and professors. This is the practical significance of this article.

The “flipped class” technology was created in 2007 as one of the forms of “blended education,” and it is becoming more and more popular. Various studies on this technology have been carried out over the past 5 years: multiple scientific studies<sup>1</sup> (De Yager, 2020; Gizatulina, 2017; Itinson, Chirkova, 2020; Konovalchuk, 2018; Lebedeva, 2016; Loginova, 2015; Xiaoyang, 2016; Yaroslavova et al., 2020; Zainuddin, Halili, 2016), articles written by specialists in the field of computer technology and online courses,<sup>2</sup> methodological research of school teachers<sup>3</sup> (Kornev, 2016) and university professors (Vavichkina, 2020; Zolotykh, Tsyu, 2018; Kalachinskaya, 2017; Prosvirkina et al., 2017; Chaynikova, 2020;

<sup>1</sup> Belokrinskaya, M.M. (2018, January 4). Flipped class technique. *Sotsial'naya Set' Rabotnikov Obrazovaniya*. (In Russ.) Retrieved May 21, 2021, from <https://nsportal.ru/shkola/obshchepedagogicheskie-tehnologii/library/2018/01/04/metodika-perevernutyy-klass>

<sup>2</sup> Firsova, P. (2016, 22 August). Upside-down classroom: 21st century learning technology. *Blog iSpring*. (In Russ.) Retrieved April 10, 2021, from <https://www.ispring.ru/elearning-insights/perevernutyi-klass-tehnologiya-obucheniya-21-veka>

<sup>3</sup> Flipped class: advantages and disadvantages. (2020, 24 January). *Yandex Uchebnik*. (In Russ.) Retrieved April 10, 2021, from <https://teacher.yandex.ru/posts/perevernutyy-klass-preimushchestva-i-nedostatki>; Ryzhova, M.A. (2019, 27 November). Ideas that I implement when teaching. *Sovremennyy Urok*. (In Russ.) Retrieved March 15, 2021, from <https://www.lurok.ru/categories/2/articles/18715>

Vulfovich, 2017), notes in blogs, author's websites and forums.<sup>4</sup> This list includes only a small part of the publications devoted to the “flipped class” technology, however, even with this amount, we can see the demand for this form of blended education.

Throughout the period of applying “flipped class” in teaching various disciplines, multiple discussions have been held concerning the efficiency of using this technology in teaching foreign students, since the low level of Russian language proficiency of certain students suggests that the theoretical material sent by the professor in advance will not be mastered to its fullest. This means that a foreigner will be insufficiently motivated and negatively disposed to education according to the proposed algorithm. That is why the authors of the article propose to improve the “flipped classroom” technology, supplementing it with authentic feature films in the educational process. Authentic feature films increase the students' motivation of students, since films are interesting to everyone, regardless of the level of language proficiency (even if the student understands the speech of the characters only partially, he can understand the essence of what is happening on the screen by the facial expressions, gestures and actions of the characters), in addition, in an unobtrusive form, there is a study of the constructions used in colloquial speech, and the implicit development of cultural competence. This allows to a certain extent to solve the indicated problem of the effective use of the “flipped classroom” technology in teaching foreign students.

Taking into account the main modern methodological principles, the authors of recent articles consider the criteria for choosing authentic videos for RFL lessons, their genre and topics (Nazarenko, Khalyavina, 2014; Rubtsova et al., 2017).

Some articles are devoted to practical aspects of using video films at the lessons of Russian as foreign language. They consider the main stages of work on video material, the conditions for the effective use of video films and their role in the forming skills and abilities in all types of speech activity (Nazarenko, Khalyavina, 2014; Strelchuk, 2011). Lexical and grammar tasks, reading and speaking exercises are offered. The authors describe innovative techniques (discussion in the form of a pyramid, panel discussion) that develop communication skills of foreign students at levels A2, B1, B2 (Denisenko et al., 2019; Konovalenko, Shkurko, 2020).

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<sup>4</sup> Godunova, E. (2016, 15 February). Upside-down class as a remedy for boredom. *Newtonew*. (In Russ.) Retrieved April 23, 2021, from <https://newtonew.com/school/flipped-classroom-in-russia>; Kurvits, M. (2020, 9 June). What is an inverted class and how is it different from a traditional class. *Masterskaya Mariny Kurvits*. (In Russ.) Retrieved April 20, 2021, from <http://marinakurvits.com/perevernutii-klass/>; Ponyatovskaya, Yu. (2016, 30 January). Teacher, are you ready for a coup? *Edcommunity.ru*. (In Russ.) Retrieved March 18, 2021, from <http://edcommunity.ru/communication/blogs/detail.php?page=post&blog=uliya-blog-s1&id=1529>

The researchers offer mainly methodological recommendations on modern feature films of a light comedy genre with vivid special effects, youth slang, in which everyday life and problems of young people are presented: “Yolki,” “Peter FM,” “My boyfriend is an Angel”, etc. (Berezhnyatskaya, Kalinina, 2018; Denisenko et al., 2019). The analysis of methodological recommendations allows to conclude that, despite the availability of manuals describing algorithms for using Russian feature films and film adaptations of artistic texts in Russian language studies, there are no materials that help foreign students to become familiar with fiction, which occupies an important place in the cultural heritage of any country, that is, they contribute to the socio-cultural adaptation of students in the context of distance education. Therefore, the method proposed by the authors of the article for conducting lessons in Russian as foreign language, is based on the “flipped classroom” technology using authentic feature films, which are screen adaptations of artistic texts. It is not only relevant, but also has undoubted practical significance. In addition, the proposed methodology can contribute to methodological science, since conducting systematic classes according to the version of the innovative technology “flipped class” adapted by the authors for teaching Russian as foreign language in both full-time and distance learning and the analysis of the results obtained are perspective for further scientific and practical research.

Thus, the purpose of the research is to describe the integration of “flipped class” technology in a foreign audience with authentic Russian films, which are screen adaptations of artistic texts.

### **Methods and materials**

To achieve this goal, the following methods were used: analysis, systematization, generalization, description, empirical methods of observing the communicative activity and linguistic and cultural awareness of foreign students in the process of studying according to the proposed methodology, survey and testing.

The research materials include the feature film “It Can’t Be!” (directed by L. Gaidai, 1975), stories by M.M. Zoshchenko “Galosh,” “Funny Adventure,” “Wedding Accident,” the play “Crime and Punishment,” files with theoretical and regional information, a file with practical tasks, a questionnaire.

The authors’ methodology involves working with foreign students of 1–3 courses of non-philological specialties with a level of Russian language proficiency not lower than B1.

### **Results**

The advantages of the methodology over the traditional form of conducting classes are as follows:

- the authors’ methodology allows to effectively conduct the educational process in a distance learning environment;
- an unusual organization of work arouses the students’ interest and increases their motivation;
- having received files with tasks for independent work, students can refer to educational materials at a convenient time and in a convenient place, which meets the principle of training individualization, and also develops the ability for self-study and self-organization;
- the selected authentic material, on the one hand, increases the cultural awareness of foreign students, and on the other hand, allows to identify gaps in the knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammatical norms of the language;
- the teacher, noting the students’ mistakes and the difficulties in completing tasks at various levels, can correct the further plan of teaching Russian as foreign language.

### Discussion

The teacher should take into account that the “flipped class” is a learning model where homework, among other things, includes the use of vodcast technologies:

- viewing a video lecture;
- reading educational texts, looking at explanatory pictures;
- passing tests for the initial comprehension of the topic (Bereznayatskaya, 2018: 118).

Classroom work includes analysis of the complicated theoretical part and questions that arouse when doing homework (not more than 25–30% of the time). Also, in the classroom, students under the supervision of the teacher solve practical problems and carry out research tasks. After the lesson, at home practical tasks are completed, tests are performed to understand and consolidate the topic covered.<sup>5</sup>

According to the methodology proposed by the authors of the article, the teacher a few days before the planned lesson based on the film directed by L. Gaidai “It Can’t Be!” gives or sends students the following set of materials:

- a text file with brief information about the film;
- an additional text file with information about M.M. Zoshchenko;
- tasks related to the category “Tasks Before Watching a Movie,” in text format;

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<sup>5</sup> Flipped class: advantages and disadvantages. (2020, 24 January). *Yandex Uchebnik*. (In Russ.) Retrieved April 10, 2021, from <https://teacher.yandex.ru/posts/perevernutyy-klass-preimuschestva-i-nedostatki>

– a link to L. Gaidai’s film “It Can’t Be,” which is available free of charge on the Internet;

– tasks related to the category “Tasks Before Watching a Movie.”

Thus, the students receive materials including information about the film, M.M. Zoshchenko’s biography and creative work, as well as files with tasks. This article provides introductory excerpts of exercises, and the full methodological development of the lesson is included in the manual “Russian Literature on the Screen” (Yarkina et al., 2019).

First of all, international students must complete the exercises from the category “Tasks Before Watching a Movie.” These exercises help to remove the lexical difficulties that inevitably arise when foreigners work with authentic speech material, especially feature films, and to show the stylistic diversity of linguistic means. In addition, these tasks acquaint students with realities shown in a film and reflecting the life of people of a certain era. Students can do these exercises independently or under the supervision of the teacher during offline or distance classes.

So, at the preview stage, students get a task to remove lexical difficulties – “Match the words and their definitions.” A fragment of the task looks like this:

1. Overture – ...

2. Gimp – ...

3. Confiscation – ...

4. ...

A. A long, delayed, intermittent, monotonous, and tedious activity.

B. Worn, tattered clothes.

C. Disgusting.

D. ...

The next task consolidates the skill of using new vocabulary in speech, students are invited to complete sentences with the words from the previous exercise:

1. In the moonlight an ordinary forest is transformed into a mysterious (\_\_\_\_\_).

2. – Just once a year he brings a kind of (\_\_\_\_\_) and he can’t read a newspaper!

3. (\_\_\_\_\_) before lunch consisted of caviar, salmon, and canned fish.

4. ...

Doing the following tasks, the students improve the skill of selecting vocabulary of various styles and different communicative situations:

Fill in the table, distributing words and phrases by headings.

Obsolete words	Slang	Vernacular

*Words:* to snack on, let it be, to arrest somebody, to scandalize, clothes, ...

For these vernaculars from the film, pick up literary equivalents (see words for references).

Walk around, now, to crack, wild birds, to beg, recently, to cling to, to organize, ...

*Words:* to sell, to realize, to have a walk, ...

The final task of the preview stage develops speaking skills:

Explain how you understand these expressions.

1. – Yeah, that’s what I’m saying, you’ve got to *go full throttle here*.
2. – You know my character, *I don’t panic*.
3. – *You’re a walker, I see! What wife did you rip off?!*
4. ...

At the second stage, foreign students work independently outside the classroom: they watch L. Gaidai’s film “It Can’t Be” and do exercises from the category “Tasks While Watching a Film.” These exercises check how attentive the students were while watching and whether they correctly understood the content of the film adaptation of a literary work.

Task while watching a movie:

Be careful when browsing and find answers to the following questions:

1. Whose portrait hung in the investigator’s office in “Crime and Punishment”?
2. Where did Anna Vasilievna Gorbushkina’s brother work?
3. What was Gorbushkin’s job?
4. How much did Gorbushkin’s house cost?
5. When did Gorbushkin leave Prosecutor’s Office?
6. At what time did Nikolai go to work (“A Funny Adventure”)?
7. How many children did the actor Anatoly and his wife Tatiana have?
8. What was actor Anatoly’s surname?

9. How was Anatoly called by his wife's colleague?
10. Where did Zina and Sophochka hide Anatoly?
11. Whose portrait was in the flat of Sophochka's neighbour?
12. What was written on the wedding cake? ("Wedding Accident")?
13. How many days did Volodya and Katya know each other?
14. What season did the novel "Wedding Accident" take place?
15. What was the name of Volodya Zavituskin's friend?
16. How did Katya ask Volodya to call her?
17. How many children did Katya have?
18. ...

During the preview and viewing stages, the students see what causes difficulties, and in offline or distance learning, the teacher answers the students' questions, and then the students, under the teacher's supervision, do exercises from the category "Tasks After Watching the Film."

At this stage, first of all, the teacher needs to check the adequacy of the students' understanding of the feature film, which may seem difficult for foreigners due to its authenticity. So, students are asked to mark the statements true or false and to correct false statements:

1. Gorbushkin was arrested for embezzlement of state property.
2. Anna Vasilyevna Gorbushkina divorced her husband.
3. Anna Vasilyevna Gorbushkina's brother worked in a pub.
4. ...

Then international students must determine who said it, to whom, and under what circumstances.

1. – You have to be very quick here, Nyusha! So... The one-eyed man will take all the furniture now... The one that's here... Paintings... The man will buy the animals. That tramp already took some clothes. I'll take something too. I won't leave you... As far as possible.

2. – Ha, to three? What's that? That's not the ultimate punitive measure... The ultimate, truthfully speaking, I have a hard time with.

3. ...

("Crime and Punishment")

1. – Ah, Zinaida, we all work hard!

2. – I can't do it! I can't do it! I can't work in such a nervous environment!

3. ...

("A Funny Adventure")



1. – Very nice, very modern marriage. The bride is alone, the groom walks into a barber-shop... Couldn't get fooled beforehand. That's right, that's right, but me, I may have been preparing a month in advance! For the sacrament of marriage! I may have gone to the hairdresser's, to the bathhouse six months before...

2. – Wait, can't you recognize your fiancée? What are you talking about?!

3. ...

(“Wedding Accident”)

Tasks from this category include more difficult questions about the content of the film and its analysis, as well as linguistic and cultural exercises.

Note that the teacher can check the tasks made by the self-taught students after the lesson and give points for completing the homework.

Thus, by combining authentic films and the “flipped classroom” technology, the teacher can successfully teach foreign students in linguistic and cultural studies remotely or significantly save study time.

### Conclusion

The use of the authors' methodology increases the efficiency of the educational process, foreign students' motivation to study the Russian language, literature, traditions of native speakers and Russian culture, students' literacy and linguistic and cultural competence. The teacher can successfully conduct the educational process in a distance learning environment.

The authors of the article consider it promising to use the “flipped class” technology in teaching Russian as foreign language not only with linguistic and cultural and regional studies, but also grammar material. With the help of this technology students will be able to master educational information in accordance with different levels of language proficiency.

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## Применение технологии «перевернутый класс» на занятиях с иностранными студентами нефилологических специальностей

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**Аннотация.** Описывается адаптированный вариант инновационной технологии «перевернутый класс», которую можно использовать в практике преподавания русского языка как иностранного (РКИ), особенно в условиях дистанционного обучения. Актуальность исследования обусловлена необходимостью создания методики, отвечающей интересам современного поколения студентов и эффективной в условиях удаленного ведения образовательного процесса. Цель – предложить методику применения в иноязычной аудитории технологии «перевернутый класс», интегрированной с использованием аутентичных русских фильмов, являющихся экранными адаптациями художественных литературных произведений. Для достижения поставленной цели применялись методы анализа, систематизации, обобщения, описания и др. Материалами исследования являлись художественный фильм «Не может быть!» (режиссер Л. Гайдай, 1975 г.), рассказы М.М. Зощенко «Галоша», «Забавное приключение», «Свадебное происшествие», пьеса «Преступление и наказание». Предлагаемая методика прошла успешную апробацию с иностранными студентами нефилологических специальностей. Инновационная технология «перевернутый класс» адаптировалась для использования в практике преподавания РКИ в условиях дистанционного обучения, подбирались аутентичные фильмы – экранизации русских литературных произведений, разрабатывалась система упражнений. Проводился эксперимент по применению авторской методики, а затем корректировалась гипотеза с учетом анкетирования и контрольного тестирования студентов. Результаты показали, что применение рассматриваемой технологии позволило повысить эффективность образовательного процесса, увеличить мотивацию иностранных студентов к изучению русского языка, литературы, традиций носителей языка и культуры России, повысить грамотность обучающихся и развить лингвокультурологическую компетенцию, формировать у иностранных студентов способность к самообучению и самоорганизации, а также успешно вести образовательный процесс в условиях дистанционного обучения. Представляется перспективным использование в практике преподавания РКИ технологии «перевернутый класс» на материале лингвокультурологического и страноведческого характера, с помощью которого обучающиеся смогут освоить учебную информацию в соответствии с различными уровнями владения языком.

**Ключевые слова:** инновационная технология, перевернутый класс, русский язык как иностранный, дистанционное обучение, аутентичные художественные фильмы, лингвокультурология, страноведение, грамматика

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