The Use of Digital Media in the Russian Language Classroom: An Empirical Research Project Conducted in Austria, South Tyrol (I) and Germany.

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1. Current state of research
- Publication of primarily theoretical scientific works that focus on using digital media in teaching Russian as a foreign language and to students at Russian universities.
- Few empirical studies available in this field concerning the subject Russian and targeting adolescent learners of Russian or non-L1 teachers of Russian. Some current empirical studies deal with:
  - the development of media literacy skills among future Russian teachers at three German universities (Baumbach et al. 2011)
  - the use of learning apps and (online) video sequences in Russian classes in Austria (Caspari 2018, 2019)
  - and the impact of blogs on Russian lexis development (Vogelmaier 2011)

2. Problem formulation
- The question is not whether or not digital media should be used, but rather how they should be implemented to provide an added value to the language learning process (Rapp 2010: 43).
- School syllabi and educational standards require Russian language teachers to implement digital media into their teaching and to critically reflect upon their use in class (BMB 2018, KMK 2012).
- The omnipresence of digital media in our everyday life does not automatically lead to their implementation into the foreign language classroom (Zierer 2016: 180, Feierabend 2017: 52, 53).
- The mere presence of digital devices at schools does not guarantee that teachers will (meaningfully) integrate them into their teaching (Roche 2008: 60).
- There appears to be a lack of professional development courses in rural areas regarding the use of digital media.

3. Research questions

RQ1: What kinds of digital media are used in the Russian language classroom and what purposes do they serve?

RQ2: How do teachers and learners of Russian assess their own digital literacy skills?

4. Research design

4.1. Participants
- L1- and non-L1 teachers of Russian working at different secondary schools in Austria, South Tyrol and Germany
- Learners of Russian aged 12-19 attending different school types in the German-speaking area

4.1. Empirical methods and data analysis

Triangulation of quantitative and qualitative research methods (Caspari et al. 2018, 2019; Feierabend 2018, 2019)

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5. Results from the online-questionnaires

5.1. Online-questionnaires for Russian teachers

Demographic data
- N: 103
- Austria: 55, South Tyrol (I): 6, Germany: 41, no answer: 1
- m: 12, f: 82, no answer: 9

Questions:
- Q1: Using the Russian keyboard is difficult for me.
- Q2: How often do you use the following digital devices in your Russian classes? (computer, smartphone, interactive whiteboard)
- Q3: How well can you handle digital media in your Russian lessons? (multiple answers possible)
- Q4: How often do you use the following digital devices for learning purposes in Russian classes? (computer, smartphone, interactive whiteboard)
- Q5: How many times a week do you use digital devices in your Russian classes?
- Q6: How would you in general assess your digital literacy skills?
- Q7: How do you use digital devices for learning purposes in Russian classes?
- Q8: For what purposes do you use digital media in your Russian classes? (multiple answers possible)
- Q9: How well can you handle digital media in your Russian lessons?

5.2. Online-questionnaires for learners of Russian

Demographic data
- N: 314
- Austria: 142, South Tyrol (II): 119, Germany: 47, no answer: 6
- m: 93, f: 211, no answer: 10

Questions:
- Q1: The use of digital media in Russian classes motivates me.
- Q2: Using the Russian keyboard (letters) sometimes causes difficulty in dealing with digital media.
- Q3: Using the Russian keyboard (letters) sometimes causes difficulty in dealing with digital media.
- Q4: For what purposes do you use digital media in your Russian classes? (multiple answers possible)
- Q5: How well can you handle digital media in your Russian lessons?
- Q6: How would you in general assess your digital literacy skills?
- Q7: How do you use digital devices for learning purposes in Russian classes?
- Q8: For what purposes do you use digital media in your Russian classes? (multiple answers possible)
- Q9: How well can you handle digital media in your Russian lessons?

6. Preliminary conclusions and future implications

- Need for better digital learning equipment at some schools that should not go without a specific media concept and technical support (cf. Bos et al. 2016).
- Need for professional development courses dealing amongst other things with online task design (e.g. tasks fostering critical reflection on digital media contents or pupils’ writing skills).
- Pointing out further research desiderata in this field.

7. References

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