Modern American Journal of Linguistics, Education, and Pedagogy
ISSN (E): 3067-7874
Volume 2, Issue 5, May, 2026
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A PEDAGOGICAL MODEL FOR DEVELOPING RUSSIAN-LANGUAGE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE AMONG UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

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Abstract
This article develops a theoretically grounded pedagogical model for fostering Russian-language communicative competence among Grade 10–11 students through purposeful integration of digital technologies. The study employs conceptual analysis, comparative synthesis of communicative language teaching and technology-mediated learning research, and instructional design. The proposed model connects four interdependent components: goal and competence specification, digital learning environment, task-based pedagogical procedures, and criterion-referenced assessment with feedback. A three-stage learning cycle—pre-communication preparation, digitally mediated interaction, and reflection with revision—operationalizes the model. Its expected contribution is a transparent correspondence between communicative objectives, learning tasks, digital affordances and observable performance indicators. The findings are a design framework and analytical propositions rather than measured gains: no classroom experiment or student achievement data are claimed. Conditions for subsequent empirical validation are specified.

Keywords: Russian as a foreign language; communicative competence; upper secondary education; digital technologies; pedagogical model; task-based learning; formative assessment.

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Introduction

Communicative competence is a central objective of contemporary language education because successful language use requires more than grammatical accuracy. Learners must interpret meaning, select appropriate linguistic resources, negotiate misunderstandings and respond to interlocutors in context. The communicative approach established the importance of language functions and situated interaction (Canale & Swain, 1980); later accounts have emphasized the strategic and discourse dimensions of performance (Bachman, 1990). In Russian-language classrooms, these dimensions are particularly relevant when adolescents encounter different registers, pragmatic conventions and spoken interaction beyond textbook dialogues. Digital environments expand opportunities for interaction through audio and video exchange, collaborative writing, asynchronous feedback and access to authentic Russian-language materials. Nevertheless, the mere presence of an application does not establish communicative learning. Technology can also reinforce isolated drills, distract learners or produce superficial participation. A coherent pedagogical model is therefore needed to explain what students should learn, how digital activities support that learning and how communicative progress should be judged. The purpose of this article is to conceptualize a pedagogical model for Grade 10–11 Russian-language instruction and identify its design principles, instructional sequence and assessment criteria. The guiding question is: how can digital tools be integrated into a methodologically consistent system that targets observable communicative performance rather than technology use as an end in itself?

Materials and Methods

The research is a theoretical and design-oriented study. Its material comprises established conceptual accounts of communicative competence, task-based language teaching, computer-assisted language learning, multimedia learning and formative assessment. Sources were selected for their relevance to the relationship among language performance, interaction, digital mediation and instructional evaluation. The procedure involved: (1) extracting pedagogically actionable constructs; (2) comparing their assumptions and limitations; (3) mapping them onto the needs of Grade 10–11 Russian-language learners; and (4)

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constructing a model with operational stages and indicators. The study draws on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2020) as a descriptive reference for reception, production, interaction and mediation, without assuming a uniform CEFR level for all pupils. Task-based principles inform the design of purposeful communicative outcomes (Ellis, 2003). Research on technology-mediated language learning and online interaction provides a basis for selecting digital affordances (Chapelle, 2001; Hampel & Stickler, 2005). Formative assessment and feedback principles guide the evaluation architecture (Black & Wiliam, 1998). The proposed model is an analytical synthesis, not a tested intervention. No schools, participants, randomization, questionnaires, proficiency scores or statistical effects are reported. This distinction is methodologically important: the article offers a testable design and a plan for validation, rather than presenting hypothetical instructional benefits as established empirical results.

Results: Structure of the Proposed Pedagogical Model

The principal outcome is a four-component model. The goal-oriented component defines the target as context-appropriate Russian-language communication, including linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic resources. The environmental component identifies conditions for equitable participation: accessible devices, reliable or offline-compatible materials, teacher moderation, privacy safeguards and differentiated scaffolding. The procedural component organizes communicative tasks across preparation, interaction and reflection. The evaluative component specifies evidence of performance, formative feedback and iterative adjustment.

Component	Instructional function	Observable evidence
Goal and competence	Specify audience, purpose, genre and language demands	Successful task completion and appropriateness
Digital environment	Provide multimodal input and communication channels	Access, participation and usable artifacts
Pedagogical procedure	Sequence preparation, interaction and revision	Interaction turns, negotiated meaning and revisions
Assessment and feedback	Apply transparent rubrics and learner reflection	Rubric ratings, feedback uptake and portfolio growth

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The components form a feedback loop rather than a linear technology pipeline: evidence from students' communicative products informs the selection of subsequent tasks, the amount of scaffolding and the level of linguistic challenge.

Three-Stage Instructional Cycle

Stage 1-pre-communication preparation-activates prior knowledge, clarifies communicative purpose and supplies comprehensible input. A teacher may present a short authentic video about a school or cultural event, provide a concise glossary and ask students to identify the speaker's intention and relevant expressions. Digital annotation or interactive transcripts may reduce processing demands, but students should not be required to master the software before they can engage with the language.

Stage 2-digitally mediated interaction-requires a meaningful information gap, choice or joint decision. Pairs might plan an exchange visit, compare travel options or negotiate a class event in Russian using a moderated video meeting or shared document. The communicative goal must be explicit; for example, students should agree on a feasible plan and justify their choices. Teacher prompts can support turn-taking, clarification requests, repair strategies and register selection. An asynchronous alternative can provide equivalent participation for learners with unstable connectivity.

Stage 3-reflection and revision-makes learning visible. Students listen to an excerpt of their discussion or review the collaborative transcript, identify moments of misunderstanding, and improve a short written or oral product. Peer feedback follows a rubric rather than a general impression of fluency. The teacher uses evidence of recurrent difficulties to plan a focused mini-lesson and a subsequent transfer task in a different communicative setting.

Illustrative Learning Scenario

An illustrative Grade 10-11 task is "Organizing a Russian-language cultural exchange." Learners receive different short descriptions of partner-school activities. Each student holds information needed by the group. In a moderated digital discussion, groups select three activities within a fixed schedule and prepare a two-minute Russian-language proposal. They then exchange proposals,

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answer questions and revise their final plan. The design elicits requests for clarification, comparisons, argumentation, agreement and disagreement, while the digital platform provides a shared record for reflection.

Phase	Digital support	Communicative product
Preparation	Short video, glossary, annotated source texts	Notes on preferences and constraints
Interaction	Moderated meeting or shared collaborative document	Negotiated schedule and oral justification
Reflection	Recording/transcript and rubric-based comments	Revised proposal and self-assessment

This scenario is an instructional illustration and must not be interpreted as a documented classroom implementation. Its value lies in making the alignment between objective, task, tool and evidence explicit.

Assessment Framework and Implementation Conditions

The model evaluates communicative performance through five dimensions: task achievement, interaction management, discourse coherence, linguistic resources and sociolinguistic appropriateness. Each dimension can be rated on a four-level analytic scale, from emerging to independent performance, using descriptors calibrated to the learners' actual starting level. Digital engagement indicators—such as logins or number of messages—may help monitor access but should not substitute for language proficiency evidence.

Criterion	Illustrative performance indicator
Task achievement	Addresses the purpose, audience and required outcome
Interaction management	Initiates, responds, clarifies and repairs misunderstanding
Discourse coherence	Organizes ideas and connects contributions logically
Linguistic resources	Uses sufficiently accurate and varied vocabulary/grammar
Sociolinguistic appropriateness	Selects suitable register and politeness strategies

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For assessment validity, the teacher should sample more than one task and communication mode. A single recorded dialogue can be influenced by anxiety, topic familiarity or unequal partner participation. Combining teacher observation, learner portfolios, peer feedback and individual oral follow-up offers more defensible evidence. Rubric descriptors should be explained before tasks and applied consistently; moderation across teachers can reduce variability in scoring. Implementation requires attention to unequal access and responsible data practices. Teachers should choose platforms permitted by the institution, obtain appropriate consent for recordings, minimize personal data collection and provide non-recorded alternatives when necessary. Automated speech recognition and generative AI may support rehearsal and feedback, but their output requires critical verification: transcription errors, inaccurate corrections and inappropriate register suggestions can mislead learners. Human pedagogical judgment remains essential.

Discussion

The proposed model is consistent with the communicative view that meaningful language use is both the goal and a mechanism of learning. Its distinctive feature is not a particular platform but an alignment principle: each technological affordance must be justified by the communicative operation it enables. A shared document, for example, is useful when learners co-construct a message and revise it; a video meeting is useful when spontaneous turn-taking and clarification are targeted. The same technology may be pedagogically weak when used only to display information or reproduce decontextualized exercises. Task-based instruction provides a bridge between abstract competence descriptions and classroom action. However, a communicative task alone does not guarantee balanced participation or development of accuracy. Teacher scaffolding, language-focused feedback and opportunities for repeated performance are needed. For adolescents learning Russian, support may include model phrases for requesting clarification, comparisons of formal and informal address, and short focused practice on recurring morphosyntactic difficulties identified in student output. Such attention to form should serve a communicative purpose rather than displace it. Digital mediation also changes the evidence available for assessment.

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Audio messages, shared drafts and revision histories can document aspects of learning that are difficult to capture in one final test. Yet traces of activity are not automatically traces of competence: a large number of messages may reflect verbosity rather than communicative success. Assessment therefore needs interpretive criteria tied to meaning, audience, coherence and interaction. The CEFR Companion Volume is useful as a reference for action-oriented descriptors, but local rubrics must be adapted to the curriculum and learners' actual proficiency (Council of Europe, 2020). The model should be understood as a context-sensitive design hypothesis. It may operate differently across schools because of class size, language exposure, teacher digital competence, connectivity and student motivation. It is also possible that the added cognitive demands of unfamiliar platforms offset benefits for some learners. Accordingly, tool selection should privilege accessibility, pedagogical simplicity and opportunities for substantive language use over novelty.

Directions for Empirical Validation

A subsequent study could use a quasi-experimental pretest–posttest design involving comparable Grade 10–11 classes. The intervention would implement the three-stage cycle over a defined instructional period; comparison instruction would cover equivalent language content and contact time without the integrated digital task sequence. The primary outcome should be performance on independently scored communicative tasks, with blinded rating where feasible. Secondary evidence could include portfolio quality, participation equity, learner perceptions and teacher implementation logs. Baseline proficiency, school context and access to devices should be documented. The assessment rubric should be piloted and inter-rater agreement reported. Analysis should account for initial proficiency and clustering by class where applicable, report effect sizes and uncertainty intervals, and avoid causal conclusions unsupported by the design. Such evidence would test whether the model improves communicative outcomes, for whom and under what conditions.

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Conclusion

This article has articulated a pedagogical model integrating competence-oriented goals, accessible digital environments, a staged communicative procedure and criterion-referenced feedback. Its methodological contribution is a reproducible design logic that links digital activities to purposeful Russian-language interaction among Grade 10–11 learners. The model prioritizes authentic communication, differentiated scaffolding, revision and transparent assessment while acknowledging practical constraints and digital risks. Because the present findings are conceptual, claims of effectiveness await systematic classroom testing. Future work should validate the model through ethically conducted studies with reliable performance measures and context-sensitive implementation analysis.

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