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TEACHERS' ATTITUDES ABOUT THE USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING²¹

Summary: Foreign language teaching today is increasingly focused on the use of new technologies as one of the additional teaching materials. Considering that traditional learning in the classroom is being moved to a virtual environment day by day, the tasks of foreign language teachers are increasing. Teachers are expected to improve in this area, to adopt new technologies and to develop their own digital literacy. However, despite the many benefits of modern technology, a number of teachers advocate their use while others reject and avoid using them. Whether and to what extent new technologies will be represented in foreign language classes largely depends on the attitudes and beliefs of teachers. Namely, personal and pedagogical beliefs of teachers can be crucial for the implementation of new technologies in teaching, and in this regard, when teachers' attitudes are positive, modern technologies are often an integral part of their pedagogical practice. On the other hand, when teachers have negative attitudes and a great aversion to new technologies, they usually do not use them and do not give students the opportunity to learn in a virtual environment using digital devices. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to point out the positive and negative attitudes and beliefs of foreign language teachers, which are often crucial for the implementation of new technologies in foreign language classes, as well as previous scientific researches that have addressed this topic.

Key words: teachers, attitudes, beliefs, foreign languages, new technologies.

INTRODUCTION

Every teacher reacts differently to technological innovations within their teaching practice. However, no matter how digitally competent they are, teachers should use technology in a different way than they use it on a daily basis. Therefore, the task of today's foreign language teachers is not at all simple because it is necessary to constantly adapt to new ways of working, combining technologies and pedagogical work, taking into account the development of all competencies and selecting adequate didactic material. All this requires a lot of time, effort, but also often a change in their long-standing

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attitudes and beliefs in order, among other things, to begin to more actively apply and develop new technologies in foreign language teaching.

Therefore, teachers' attitudes influence the determination of their behavior in the school environment. The attitudes of teachers towards current educational policy and teaching practices can be largely recognized in the way they teach, the expectations they have from students, the achievement of their students, but also the acceptance of innovations in teaching (Cook 2002: 204).

On the one hand, positive attitudes of teachers have a positive effect on the successful introduction and application of technologies in teaching. The results of research that dealt with this topic show that, when teachers have a positive attitude, they accept novelties more easily and overcome many challenges along the way.

On the other hand, negative attitudes of teachers, both personal and professional, often occur, which can have a bad effect on the introduction of technologies. The most frequent refusal of teachers to improve in this area doesn't help students much, and the development of teaching with the use of technology is slowing down and constantly hindering.

Bearing in mind the above, the aim of this paper is to point out the role of foreign language teachers and their positive and negative attitudes and beliefs, which are crucial for the implementation or rejection of new technologies in foreign language classes.

1. FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS AND THE USE OF MODERN TECHNOLOGIES

Helping foreign language teachers to understand how to use technology to facilitate learning is one of the priorities of the school system (Lawless, Pellegrino 2007: 581). In addition to this knowledge, teachers can provide students with constructive and connected knowledge, which they can use in real situations. Although technology makes learning easier and faster in the usual way, this doesn't mean that it is not possible to create new better approaches, or to change the context of learning, instruction and tasks. In this sense, this is the greatest challenge of modern teachers who are constantly expected to change their work (Lawless, Pellegrino 2007: 581).

In this regard, Pejović and Andrijević (2017: 182) conducted research with spanish language teachers in Serbia. The results of the online survey showed that teachers try to use new technologies to support the implementation of some activities, in the classroom and outside, which encourages students to use new technologies. Teachers said that in addition to using computers to project films and audio materials, they also encourage their students to make short videos or clips, to present various topics or communicative situations. One respondent pointed out that he organizes virtual visits to various museums, but also motivates students to expand their vocabulary through adequate search on the Internet.

Pejović and Andrijević (2017: 182) came to the conclusion that there is a double interpretation of the role of new technologies in education. On the one hand, technologies facilitate the acquisition of a foreign language, while on the other hand, they serve to raise students' awareness of the proper use of new technologies and the Internet and how to get the most out of it (for example, website recommendation, use of keywords, applications, etc.).

Similar to a previous study, Gong and Lai (2018: 23) examined and monitored five foreign language teachers who had just started teaching practice in primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong. The research lasted for two years and dealt with the issue of the use of technology by teachers. The results indicated that the initial understanding of technological integration in teaching is quite intertwined with their developed competencies, as well as their teacher identity. As they learned about the basic steps of teaching, with students and classroom management, they increasingly wanted to introduce technology to their language classes.

In addition, Gong and Lai (2018: 23) concluded that the school environment in which the respondents started their work also has a significant role in the development path of teachers. Namely, the school environment mediates between teachers' perceptions of activities of teaching and using technology, as well as the interaction between teachers' identities and the pedagogical use of technology.

So, how teachers will react to technologies depends to a large extent on the environment in which they work, they improve and conduct teaching practice on a daily basis.

Janjić, Librenjak and Kocijan (2017: 237-238), as part of the project and workshop, conducted research on the use of technology with foreign language teachers at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb. The results indicated that the majority of teachers, as many as 88.9%, still use printed teaching materials. Although most teachers in the surveys point out that certain forms of technology are a more desirable solution for teaching, the results show that they don't use them enough in practice. Respondents and participants in this workshop pointed out in the entrance surveys that they don't use online platforms for teaching foreign languages due to poor knowledge of certain digital resources, as well as uncertainty reflected in the adequate application of technology in the classroom.

After the workshop, about 85% of teachers said they would try to apply in their practice what they learned, while 100% of respondents said they want to learn more about the possibilities of using technology in foreign language classes (Janjić, Librenjak, Kocijan 2017: 237-238). Also, one part of the teachers had positive attitudes towards technology before the workshop, while the other part after the workshop became more open and ready to use this modern didactic tool.

According to Janjić, Librenjak and Kocijan (2017: 237-238), teachers became more aware of the benefits of technology at the end of the workshop and thus pointed out that they want to further learn how to use programs and

applications to create teaching materials. In addition, it is important for them to enable their students to be more independent in learning foreign languages with the help of technology when working on project assignments in a group.

Furthermore, factors that have a significant impact on the effective use of technology in teaching by teachers are both the lack of training and the lack of technological infrastructure (Gülbahar 2008).

A study by Egbert, Paulus and Nakamichi (2002) on this topic showed that a lack of time, support and appropriate materials affects the creation of mostly negative attitudes of teachers about technology. In the research, one of the surveyed teachers pointed out that they have hardware, software, but that there is a lack of teacher training. For that reason, systematic training of teachers regarding the adequate use of technology in teaching is necessary and more important, in addition to having devices in the classroom.

A number of authors (Lee, Protacio 2010; Shai, Bichelmeyer 2007; Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andre, Richardson, Orfanos 2009; Fuzeih Sab, Chen 2004; Dudney, Hockley 2007; Parks et al. 2003; Zao 2003, cited in: Sabzian, Pourhossein Gilakjani 2013: 69) emphasizes that effective professional development of teachers should be supported and focused on certain content, in this case on learning foreign languages. This would enable visible changes in teaching practice in order to encourage better teaching. A focus on specific content and a special, pre-planned, pedagogical strategy would allow teachers to consider the benefits of technology in foreign language teaching and thus introduce it more quickly into their practice. Therefore, such training should not be focused exclusively on the use of technology, but it is necessary to connect with a particular program and plan, as well as the area of a particular subject, with special attention to the pedagogical practice of all teachers.

Therefore, since the effective use of technology in teaching is more related to pedagogical principles, this training should be focused not only on hardware and software, but also on their use related to pedagogy, content and context (Lee, Protacio 2010; Shai, Bichelmeyer 2007; Wei, Darling-Hemond, Andre, Richardson, Orfanos 2009; Fuzeih Sab, Chen 2004; Dudenei, Hockley 2007; Parks et al. 2003; Zao 2003, cited in: Sabzian, Pourhossein Gilakjani 2013: 69).

Keeping in mind the above, Sučević (2008: 75) concludes that the central place is occupied by teachers who manage foreign language teaching, as organizers, associates, coordinators. That is why access to technology depends exclusively on the available equipment, as well as on training, interests, self-confidence, as well as the attitudes of teachers. It is important to point out that the focus is not on technology, but on enabling students to be creative, to get closer to the subject of foreign languages and cultures, to animate, to encourage them to be participants in the educational process, not just observers. Therefore, it is necessary for students to independently research and create their own projects in the digital environment.

In this process, the role of teachers is crucial, and it is therefore necessary to continuously improve to work with technologies as well as for new learning. The tasks of foreign language teachers are more demanding and

responsible, and for that they need the support of the system and creators of educational policy (Budimir Ninković, Sučević, Stevanović 2013: 259-260).

2. ATTITUDES OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS ABOUT MODERN TECHNOLOGIES

First of all, attitudes depend on the knowledge, thoughts and feelings that each individual has about other persons and groups, which serve him to define and determine the interaction with others (Olson, Zanna 1993: 119). Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) emphasize that attitude is a learned predisposition that affects how individuals will react, i.e., whether they will do so in a favorable or unfavorable way in relation to a given object. Cook (2002: 203) adds that attitudes are functional because they enable the expression of basic values and beliefs that guide the behavior of each person.

Many factors influence the creation and shaping of attitudes, similar to the information an individual possesses in relation to a particular object or situation, in relation to a particular group to which he belongs, the cultural context in which he functions on a daily basis. Therefore, the importance of attitudes is reflected in the fact that they influence the behavior of each of us, either positively or negatively, and indirectly affect our action (Jovanović 2009: 15).

When we talk about teachers, Borg (2001: 186) argues that attitudes are accompanied by their personal and pedagogical beliefs that serve to understand the reasons for certain actions of teachers in their work. Beliefs are based on reasoning, evaluation, they influence the opinion of teachers, decisions, behavior, their practice, and can cause hindrance in the attempt to introduce innovations.

Frequently, personal belief systems, as well as beliefs acquired during undergraduate study, have a strong effect on the development of educational programs, teaching practice, and making decision (Pahares 1992; Clark, Peterson 1986; Feng 1996). Robson and Eraut (1991, 1985, cited in Pahares 1992: 310) believe that the construction of attitudes dates back to the student days, while images of what teaching should be like remain in the subconscious of teachers for a long time and affect their future practice.

In accordance with the above, foreign language teachers also strive to adopt new practices in the classroom in accordance with personal epistemological beliefs and knowledge.

Namely, Burkhardt, Fraser and Ridgeway (1990) explain that if teachers' attitudes and beliefs don't match the goals and assumptions of educational innovations, there is certainly resistance among teachers. Conversely, if attitudes and beliefs are compatible with education reforms, ideas will be accepted, adopted, and gladly developed and encouraged in the classroom. Tilema (1994, quoted in Jovanović, Pejović 2013: 409) points out that it often happens that attitudes and beliefs remain the same and unshaken if the gap between existing and new knowledge is greater. Therefore, it is not enough for teachers to just get acquainted with modern methods and trends in science

and learning foreign languages, as well as with modern trends in foreign language teaching, because that does not mean that it will significantly affect their work. It is necessary to create conditions in which teachers will be able to more carefully reconsider their deep attitudes and beliefs about language teaching. This would determine whether teachers serve them in achieving a higher quality of today's teaching or whether it is necessary to change them substantially.

Bearing in mind that the conditions for successful access to technology are created every day, Ertmer (2005: 27-28) draws attention to the fact that in teaching teachers in this area, it is necessary to address the so-called "invisible factors". Namely, the mentioned factors influence the decisions of teachers, and are actually reflected in their attitudes and beliefs, that is, the view of what teaching should look like and what it brings to them in teaching practice.

In this regard, the attitudes and beliefs of teachers play a significant role in education and are important for examining the outcome of the integration of technology and modern methods in the classroom (Albion, Ertmer, 2002; Becker, Ravitz, Wong 1999). Tsitouridou, Vryzas (2003), Mukti (2000), Kumar, Kumar (2003) together point out that foreign language teachers respond to new technologies in teaching, in accordance with their training in this field, computer knowledge and experience with computers, as well as in accordance with the degree of inclination or anxiety they have in relation to the computer and other devices.

At the same time, the attitudes and beliefs of foreign language teachers about the use of new methods depend on how much they value technology, as well as on their thinking about what can bring them good and what pedagogical goals they can achieve using them (Watson 2006; Zhao, Pugh, Sheldon, Byers, 2002; Hughes 2005). When a new pedagogical approach is introduced into the curriculum, teachers rely on their judgment as to whether it is relevant and in line with their goals. Thus, the active introduction of technology in foreign language classes doesn't go unnoticed.

However, when they master the knowledge necessary for the successful application of technology and when they realize that they can connect that knowledge with their subject, teachers are more willing to actively apply technology in their foreign language classes (Ottenbreit-Leftwich 2007). Also, having in mind the needs of students, who are largely connected to technology on a daily basis, they prefer to include multimedia materials and multimodal content in their classes, believing that it will provide them with quality learning outcomes in a digital environment.

3. POSITIVE ATTITUDES ABOUT THE USE OF MODERN TECHNOLOGIES IN TEACHING PRACTICE

When teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of modern technologies in the classroom, it has a positive effect on the introduction and development of digital literacy.

According to Staub and Stern (2002), teachers who develop positive attitudes but also the constructivist type of attitudes²², gladly accept new technologies. Their students are not passive recipients, but are active in the process of acquiring knowledge. Consequently, teachers with a constructivist type of attitude turn more to new methods, creating circumstances in which students themselves solve certain problems in their own way, enabling them to play an active role in activities (Staub, Stern 2002). In this regard, both Becker and Ravitz (2001) conclude that there is a strong link between the use of technology in the classroom and the constructivist view of teachers on foreign language learning. Therefore, teachers whose attitude is reflected in encouraging students to actively learn, which is the basis of constructivism, prefer to use technology and be active in the digital environment.

In this regard, Maksimović and Osmanović (2017: 267) conducted a qualitative research related to the digital competence of teachers in primary schools in the city of Niš. After the analysis, it was confirmed that there are positive attitudes about the use of computers in teaching practice.

As expected, Maksimović and Osmanović (2017: 267) pointed out that younger respondents had more positive attitudes about technologies, however, the motivation for improvement in computer work was, in general, high among a larger number of teachers. The results of the research showed that teacher education is necessary in the application of new technologies in education. Therefore, the conclusion is that more training hours are needed, especially for older teachers who often reject technologies and have negative attitudes.

Hudgins (2008) conducted a quantitative study to test the opinions of high school teachers on the use of technology in pedagogical practice. The focus was also on the internal or external barriers of teachers that hinder their use of technology, then on the way they use technology, as well as the relationship between their beliefs and the use of technology.

Using correlation and descriptive statistics for data analysis, Hudgins (2008) concluded that most of the teachers surveyed largely believe in the importance of integrating technology into the curriculum. At the same time, the results show that teachers believe that technology has the potential to change the way of teaching, as well as the content of teaching materials, while increasing the motivation for students to learn because they are allowed different activities. Hudgins (2008) also concluded that teachers' beliefs about the importance and benefits of integrated technology make it possible to overcome obstacles that can sometimes hinder their work.

²²Constructivism is an alternative understanding of knowledge based on holistic conceptualization. According to constructivism, the creation of knowledge is not limited exclusively to intellectual effort, but also includes the richness of human experience, similar to emotional, physical and spiritual. Thus, knowledge as such is not seen only as a routine, process and sum of individual parts and abilities, but is essential and complex in nature because it connects all human interactions and relationships (Stayre, Ingelgard, Roth 2000, cit. in: Jovanović 2016: 34).

4. NEGATIVE ATTITUDES ABOUT THE USE OF MODERN TECHNOLOGIES IN TEACHING PRACTICE

Contrary to positive teachers' attitudes, negative attitudes have a bad effect on the introduction of new technologies. Frequently refusal of teachers to progress in this area doesn't help students much, and the development of teaching with the use of modern technologies is slowing down. Therefore, the question arises as to how negative attitudes are created? What strongly influences teachers to reject any form of use of modern technologies in foreign language teaching?

First, when we emphasize the nature of the attitudes of foreign language teachers, it is necessary to refer to one of the categories according to Staub and Stern (2002), which is the traditional type of attitudes of teachers associated with negative attitudes about modern technologies. Namely, according to the traditional type of attitudes, teachers present knowledge in a clear and structured way, with concrete solutions, giving students problems that they solve in a more passive way. In support of this, Becker and Ravitz (2001: 160-161) believe that when teachers' attitudes tend towards a traditional philosophy of learning and teaching where knowledge is transferred exclusively according to a rigidly structured curriculum, it is certain that these teachers will largely avoid new technologies.

Furthermore, Dupagne and Krendl (1992) are of the opinion that one of the reasons for creating negative attitudes of teachers is the experience in working with computers. Most of the time spent with computers, as well as enough experience in working with them, mainly influence the creation of positive attitudes of teachers towards technology and their easier application as a modern teaching tool.

Conversely, if there is a lack of experience in this area, teachers' self-confidence decreases, which often leads to an increase in their anxiety and uneasiness towards technology, which creates negative attitudes that adversely affect the learning and teaching process (Dupagne, Krendl 1992).

Certain research has shown that teachers' emotions towards technology range from euphoria to heightened repulsion, fear and high anxiety according to their experience and beliefs (Berson 1996; Saye 1998). Anxiety is reflected in the increased fear of using a computer, which causes unpleasant feelings, as well as discomfort in anticipation of negative outcomes when using it (Chang 2005: 713). As a result of this phenomenon, Or (2009, cited in Tuncer, Dogan, Tanas 2013: 90) draws attention to various forms of so-called computer anxiety, such as feelings of frustration, then fear of computer damage, which is reflected in teachers they are afraid of damaging software or hardware, as well as the shame that teachers feel if they make a mistake in using computers in front of students. All this is the reason for the refusal of teachers to use technology in teaching.

Eko Setyarini (2015: 81) conducted research on this topic with 32 English teachers in Indonesia. The conclusion is that half of the teachers out of the total number of respondents feel anxious when using computers. Namely, the causes of their anxiety are the result of insufficient training in the use of technology, which makes it much more difficult for them to adapt to new methods and at the same time create negative attitudes and reluctance.

Bucur and Popa (2017: 259) conclude that this is why negative attitudes and beliefs of teachers about technology block learning, while their fears result in giving up the use of technology because they are faced with the fact that their students are digitally more competent than them. . Additional reasons include unequal access to digital tools due to lack of material resources, but also lack of guidelines for selecting adequate content in the digital environment that they can use in their classes.

Also, Liu, Koehler and Wang (2018: 1473) examined the beliefs of teachers in China about the readiness of their students to learn using technology. The results showed that foreign language teachers in China don't have much confidence in the ability of students to learn independently using technology. Also, teachers pointed out that students are not able to sufficiently manage their own learning, as well as to refrain from playing games or so-called surfing the Internet. Liu, Koehler and Wang (2018: 1473) argue that this opinion of teachers can be attributed to the Chinese cultural context, where teachers are considered the authority of the classroom and have a dominant role in deciding how to learn, in this case, a foreign language. Therefore, their beliefs about students and how they use technology, in fact, play an important role in whether they will decide to use technology in foreign language classes at all.

Despite having access to classroom computers, many teachers are skeptical about the value of technology in teaching and learning. Francis-Pelton and Pelton (1996: 71) argue that the increased rejection of technology in foreign language teaching is reflected in the lack of teacher training to develop digital skills and literacy, which significantly affects their self-confidence and positive attitudes towards technology.

It is interesting that in the qualitative research of García Chamorro and Rey (2013: 60), it was also concluded that language teachers are aware of the need for the necessary development of skills and literacy related to the use of technology. However, they do not look for ways to strengthen and improve them, except by attending workshops organized by certain institutions. On the other hand, one of the results is that a certain group of teachers believes that they can survive for a long time in their work with basic skills, which do not include the use of technology. Therefore, they do not want to make an effort to learn how to use modern methods and materials, relying exclusively on strategies that have long been used in teaching practice.

In addition to all the mentioned factors, it should be emphasized that the attitudes and beliefs of foreign language teachers also vary in strength. Therefore, Kagan (1992: 57) believes that how easy it will be to change both personal beliefs and pedagogical attitudes depends on how much certain

attitudes of teachers are strengthened during life and education. However, although sometimes seemingly unattainable, it is believed that teachers can change their views on the value of technology in foreign language learning if they witness the positive and successful experiences of their colleagues. This is exactly the solution to the encouragement and motivation of this type of teacher. In fact, Griffin and Ohlsson (2001: 57) suggest that teachers who reject technologies should be linked to colleagues who are happy to apply them in order to show them how it affects students and how much it motivates them to work.

CONCLUSION

New technologies, without a doubt, facilitate the acquisition of foreign languages and serve to raise students' awareness. According to the mentioned research papers, many teachers became more aware of the benefits of new technologies and want to learn how to use programs and applications to create teaching materials. On the other hand, whether new technologies will be part of the teaching work depends mostly on the beliefs and attitudes of teachers.

In this regard, the attitudes and beliefs of teachers play a significant role in education and are important for examining the outcome of the integration of technology and modern methods in the classroom. Starting from the environment and the social context in which they are educated and improved, teachers from the initial schooling develop attitudes about teaching, about what classes should look like, how knowledge of language and culture develops. Furthermore, when they begin to engage in teaching practice, the school environment and the collective have a strong influence on their image of ideal classes, where in accordance with their personal views, professional attitudes are formed in different directions.

Taking into account the attitudes of the teachers, if teachers are inclined to change in teaching and don't have fear of risk, changes in the form of new technologies and development are not a problem but a challenge that must be overcome for foreign language teaching in digital environment. Conversely, if teachers are supporters of traditional learning where the evaluation of technology in pedagogical work is minimal, negative attitudes, rejection and skepticism are common phenomena that are often accompanied by fear and insecurity of teachers, which doesn't leave enough space for introduction and development of new online learning.

In the end, only teachers who are aware of the pedagogical value of new technologies, who cultivate positive attitudes towards learning in the digital environment and who are continuously improving in this field can adequately use digital resources in teaching and learning foreign languages and create new online pedagogical methods which are in line with current digital generations (Vidosavljević 2021: 99-100).

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STAVOVI NASTAVNIKA O UPOTREBI NOVIH TEHNOLOGIJA U NASTAVI STRANIH JEZIKA

Sažetak: Nastava stranih jezika je danas sve više okrenuta ka upotrebi modernih nastavnih materijala nalik novim tehnologijama. Uzevši u obzir da se tradicionalno učenje u učionici iznova izmešta u virtuelno okruženje, zadaci nastavnika stranih jezika su sve veći. Od nastavnika se očekuje da se usavršavaju u ovoj oblasti, da prihvataju savremene tehnologije i da razvijaju sopstvenu digitalnu pismenost. Međutim, uprkos mnogobrojnim benefitima modernih tehnologija, jedan broj nastavnika se zalaže za njihovu upotrebu dok drugi deo nastavnika odbija i izbegava da ih koristi. Da li će i koliko nove tehnologije biti zastupljene na časovima stranih jezika, umnogome zavisi od stavova i uverenja nastavnika. Naime, lična i pedagoška uverenja nastavnika mogu biti presudna za implementaciju novih tehnologija u nastavi te s tim u vezi, kada su stavovi nastavnika pozitivni neretko su i savremene tehnologije sastavni deo njihove pedagoške prakse. S druge strane, kada nastavnici imaju negativne stavove i veliku odbojnost ka novim tehnologijama, najčešće ih ne koriste i ne pružaju učenicima mogućnost da uče u virtuelnom okruženju koristeći digitalne uređaje. Stoga je cilj ovog rada da se ukaže na značaj pozitivnih i ograničenja negativnih stavovanastavnika stranih jezika koji su neretko presudni za implementaciju novih tehnologija na časovima stranih jezika, ali i na dosadašnja naučna istraživanja koja se bave pomenutom temom.

Ključne reči: nastavnici, stavovi, uverenja, strani jezici, nove tehnologije.