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THE ROLE OF MENTORING TECHNOLOGIES IN DEVELOPING THE METHODOLOGICAL COMPETENCE OF NOVICE FRENCH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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Abstract: The article explores mentoring as an effective tool for enhancing the methodological competence of novice French language teachers in higher education institutions. Particular attention is paid to the professional adaptation of young educators, the improvement of teaching skills, and the formation of professional identity. The study examines contemporary mentoring models, including traditional, peer, and digital mentoring. Practical recommendations are proposed for organizing mentoring support systems for French language teachers in universities of Uzbekistan.

Keywords: mentoring, French language teaching, methodological competence, professional development, novice teachers, higher education, digital mentoring, language education.

The modernization of higher education and the growing demand for multilingual specialists have significantly increased the requirements imposed on foreign language teachers. In particular, French language instructors are expected not only to demonstrate advanced linguistic competence but also to apply innovative teaching methodologies, integrate digital technologies, and create learner-centered educational environments. Consequently, the successful professional development of novice teachers has become a strategic issue for universities.

Despite strong academic preparation, many beginning teachers encounter difficulties when they enter professional practice. They often struggle with lesson planning, classroom management, assessment design, and the implementation of communicative teaching approaches. These challenges are especially evident in French language education, where linguistic, cultural, and methodological dimensions must be integrated into a coherent learning process.

Mentoring has emerged as one of the most effective mechanisms for supporting novice teachers during the transition from academic preparation to professional practice. Through continuous guidance, feedback, and collaborative reflection, mentoring contributes to the development of methodological competence and professional confidence.

Theoretical Foundations of Methodological Competence. Methodological competence can be defined as a teacher's ability to select, adapt, and implement appropriate teaching methods in accordance with educational objectives and learner needs. In the context of French language teaching, methodological competence includes several interconnected dimensions:

– mastery of communicative and action-oriented approaches;
– effective lesson planning and sequencing;
– classroom interaction management;
– assessment and feedback strategies;
– integration of digital learning resources;
– intercultural communication skills.

Researchers emphasize that methodological competence develops gradually through professional experience and reflective practice. Therefore, systematic support during the early stages of a teaching career is essential. Mentoring as a Professional Development Strategy. Mentoring refers to a structured

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professional relationship in which an experienced educator supports the learning and development of a less experienced colleague. Unlike traditional supervision, mentoring is based on collaboration, trust, and professional dialogue.

Within French language education, mentoring serves several important functions:

First, it facilitates professional adaptation. Novice teachers become familiar with institutional expectations, curriculum requirements, and classroom realities.

Second, mentoring promotes methodological growth. Through lesson observations, co-planning activities, and reflective discussions, young teachers acquire practical teaching strategies.

Third, mentoring strengthens professional identity. Regular interaction with experienced colleagues helps beginning teachers develop confidence and establish a clear understanding of their professional role. Methodological Challenges Faced by Novice French Language Teachers

Young French language teachers frequently encounter difficulties related to the practical implementation of teaching methodologies. One of the most common challenges is maintaining a communicative classroom environment. Although communicative language teaching is widely recognized as an effective approach, many beginning teachers experience uncertainty when organizing pair work, group discussions, and task-based activities.

Another challenge involves integrating authentic materials. French newspapers, podcasts, videos, and literary texts provide valuable learning opportunities; however, selecting materials appropriate to learners' proficiency levels requires considerable pedagogical expertise. Assessment also represents a significant area of difficulty. Designing evaluation tools that accurately measure communicative competence while maintaining reliability and validity remains a complex task for novice educators.

Mentoring Models in French Language Teacher Education. Several mentoring models can contribute to methodological competence development. Traditional mentoring involves one experienced teacher supporting one novice teacher. This model provides individualized guidance and continuous feedback. Peer mentoring encourages collaboration among teachers with similar professional experience. It promotes reflective practice and collective problem-solving.

Digital mentoring utilizes online platforms, virtual meetings, and collaborative digital spaces. This approach expands access to professional support and enables communication beyond institutional boundaries.

Hybrid mentoring combines face-to-face and digital interaction. This model is increasingly relevant in contemporary higher education environments and offers flexibility while preserving personal engagement.

Practical Recommendations. To improve mentoring practices in French language teacher education, universities should:

1. Develop institutional mentoring programs with clearly defined objectives and evaluation criteria.
2. Provide mentor training focused on coaching techniques, reflective dialogue, and constructive feedback.
3. Encourage collaborative lesson planning and classroom observation.
4. Establish professional communities of practice among French language teachers.
5. Integrate digital mentoring tools into professional development initiatives.
6. Recognize mentoring activities within academic workload calculations and professional evaluation systems.

Conclusion: The professional development of novice French language teachers requires systematic pedagogical support. Mentoring represents an effective mechanism for facilitating methodological competence development, professional adaptation, and long-term career growth. By

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combining traditional and innovative mentoring approaches, higher education institutions can create supportive professional environments that enhance teaching quality and strengthen the preparation of future language educators. The implementation of structured mentoring programs in universities can significantly contribute to the modernization of French language education and improve educational outcomes.

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