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Research article

Russian language in Pakistan: course analysis and development pathways

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Abstract. Within Pakistan's distinctive educational landscape, teaching foreign languages entails significant challenges alongside profound professional fulfilment. Teaching a foreign language is challenging but simultaneously rewarding. To address this global phenomenon, this study aims to analyse Russian language teaching courses offered at major Pakistani academic institutions. The current research addressed teachers' and students' attitudes towards Russian language programmes at universities in Pakistan. The study used a mixed methods design as a data collection tool. The objective was to explore teachers' and students' attitudes and motivation towards the Russian language course. The results of the current research reveal that teachers and students had positive attitudes towards learning Russian as a foreign language despite the difficulty and nature of language learning. The interview results also confirmed the current state of Russian language teaching courses within Pakistan and the challenges teachers and students face regarding course content, learning problems, and resources. The study presents a way forward to revamp the successful implementation of Russian as a foreign language in Pakistani higher education institutes.

Keywords: Pakistani institutions, teaching Russian language, educational challenges, program evaluation, teaching courses

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Introduction

Teaching foreign languages has been widely recognised as a significant area for research in education and language teaching. The importance of learning a foreign language is quite demanding in the global world (Pathan et al., 2024; Abbasi et al., 2025). The Russian language (RL) is spoken globally and has received worldwide recognition in academia. The existing literature suggests that interest in learning the Russian language has increased in Pakistan for academic and political reasons (NUML¹). Instead of much interest in RL, Russian language programmes in higher institutes of Pakistan are still far from a developed structure and policy, limited to only two or three educational institutes. This research explores the evolution, current landscape and the potential of the Russian language in Pakistan, covering universities' initiatives, pedagogical challenges, teacher and learner attitudes, and motivation.

Regarding the beginning of Russian language classes, it was discovered that the RCSC was created in 1974, while Russian language training for certificates began in later years. A certification course in the Russian language was first offered at one of the Pakistani universities in 1971, followed by a diploma course in 1974. Regarding entrance standards, including the minimal educational qualification required to register in a Russian language programme or diploma, it was discovered that at RCSC, anybody may be admitted to a Russian communication certificate programme. Admission standards at various universities vary depending on the programme. The minimal qualification for one-semester certificate courses in Russian is matriculation or equivalent. Nevertheless, for diploma studies in Russian (two semesters), the minimal qualifications are matriculation or equivalent with an elementary certificate of completion in Russian. Punjab University awards a one-year diploma for the Russian language to students who complete/pass the two-semester examinations. NUML awards students a Certificate of Russian Language who complete/pass one semester. On the other hand, a diploma in the Russian language is awarded to students who complete/pass two-semester examinations and maintain a minimum attendance of 80%. Certificates and diplomas are awarded only after completing the exam(s) and meeting the minimum attendance requirements at all three institutes. Universities which offer RFL, there is a minimum attendance of 50%, 80%, and 80%, respectively. Learners who do not meet the minimum attendance requirement may seek readmission to all three schools.

Before examining the condition of state educational institutions, it is vital to investigate the situation surrounding the implementation of Russian language courses offered in various Pakistani institutions. The Russian Embassy in Islamabad does not provide Russian language instruction or certificate courses. When analysing the legal implications of certificates and diplomas, it is noted that at Punjab University and NUML, certificate courses and diplomas are authorised by university executive bodies that involve the Board of Faculties and the Academic

¹ NUML (2023). *Language Departments Overview*. National University of Modern Languages. Retrieved from www.numl.edu.pk

Council, as they are public sector institutions. The certificate courses at RCSC are authorised and executed by the Russian government as part of its diplomatic programmes and national ambition to teach Russian to foreign citizens. Regarding location, they deal with courses in the student's homeland. The central issue, therefore, is the lack of a social and educational context for the Russian language. However, course participants represent the same culture and communicate the same language, so they encounter the same challenges when learning Russian. The methodological idea of considering the pupils' home language is evident. The lack of Russian language and cultural setting is compensated for by incorporating technologically advanced learning materials (primarily computer, audio, and video). These tools aid with listening and reading abilities and can also be used to demonstrate movies of Russian towns, galleries, collections, streets, marketplaces, and so on. The training period in Russian language classes in Pakistan, organised through the University of Punjab, is one academic year (October to June each year), or 39–40 weeks. Each lesson lasts three hours each day, three days a week. Therefore, the overall number of hours fluctuates between 300 and 350 every course of instruction. We may term such classes regular with these characteristics, meaning they take between 4 and 8 hours weekly (Kozdra, 2003).

In some universities, students learn the Russian language for four hours a day, five days a week. There are two sorts of programmes for teaching Russian: certificate and diploma. The certification is six months long, while the diploma course lasts one year. Both of these programmes take place in NUML's Islamabad campus. At NUML, courses were conducted in morning. The three courses of three months' duration were planned and presented in 2023. Paid classes at RCSC are offered in the evening during working days, i.e., Monday through Friday. Free lessons are provided in the afternoons on working days.

The Russian language certificate programmes and diplomas syllabus is stable and does not change to meet the needs of diverse students and learning objectives at all three institutions studied. NUML has an established course outline that all professors follow. The learning plan for the certificate training in the Russian language is implemented at RCSC, and it is prepared by faculty based on the texts they are teaching. Punjab University only produced a solid syllabus in 2010. Previously, teachers were responsible for determining the precise course topic that would be covered. Furthermore, students at NUML are taught the fundamentals of Russian culture, such as festivals, national holidays, etiquette, and others. Russian literature has been explored through short tales and poems by classical writers from various eras. The course includes biographies of well-known Russian painters. Furthermore, students perform poems at classes, goodbye parties, and other occasions. Students at Punjab University and RCSC learn new themes (shopping, transit, holidays, etc.) while becoming familiar with Russians' customs, social lives, and conversational behaviour. The main goal of Russian language training is to shape and develop the student's understanding and abilities (competencies) at the fundamental levels of language competence — A1 (Survival level) along with A2 as defined by the Common European Framework for References (CEFR). Makarova et al. (Ma-

karova et al., 2020) identified four learning objectives: 1) productive and responsive; 2) receptive-productive, having a continual process focused on oral speech; 3) receptive-productive, having a continual process of reading; and 4) responsive. While discussing the course topics, it was discovered that these methods are based on a communicative approach. Gavrishyk (Gavrishyk, 2023) figured out some short courses and their efficacy in terms of training and skills. Bazylev agreed that “in the beginning stages of learning a foreign language, speaking orally is supposed to be of the highest priority, following which comprehension and proficiency in writing will become important respectively” (Bazylev, 2019). Moreover, cross-cultural competency and communication skills development are vital in class.

The theoretical foundations reflect language learning theories that provide a strong basis for teaching Russian as a foreign language. From the viewpoint of Ellis (Ellis, 2015), Krashen has hypothesized second language learning and emphasized comprehensible input. In the context of language learning, Wade (Wade, 2020) pointed out the complex morphological system of the Russian language. Regarding the complex nature of the Russian language, Comrie, Stone, Polinsky (Comrie, Stone, Polinsky, 1996) have also endorsed earlier research showing that learners struggle with learning verbs, conjugations, and case endings. This critical review synthesises primary research on Russian as a foreign language (RFL) and addresses pedagogical challenges. An increasing focus on RFL has drawn the attention of researchers globally. The latest surveys suggest that Russian is one of the most widely spoken languages worldwide. It is a lingua franca in post-Soviet states and diaspora communities (Kagan, Kudyma, Miller, 2015).

The number of students learning Russian has steadily increased, owing to the Russian language’s expanding significance in the academic setting and the improvement of international ties between Russia and Pakistan. Given that Pakistan’s energy needs are growing, Pakistan and Russia are negotiating several bilateral agreements ranging from oil and gas transportation to wheat and additional agricultural goods. Pakistan also wants to improve its trade relations with Russia and is looking to export industrial products to the Russian market. To meet these goals, learning to communicate in Russian is essential. As a result of globalization, Russia is expanding diplomatic contacts and developing closer ties with numerous countries, including Iran, China, India, Pakistan, and the Middle East, to Far Eastern countries, to gain regional influence. Historically, Pakistan has had poor diplomatic relations with Russia, and there has been little formal trade and commerce. Pakistan is now turning to Russia as a market for its industries, notably sports, surgical equipment, medicines, and many other items, and interest in Russia is growing.

Furthermore, Pakistanis are interested in Russian historical events, culture, and language. Pakistan has no cultural centers except the Russian Centre for Culture and Scientific Research (RCSC) in Karachi. A few decades ago, there were no institutional centres where Pakistani citizens could learn Russian as a foreign language (RFL); moreover, there were no relevant departments at the institutions, and if they did exist, they were not in the spotlight and were not well recognised. As technology advances, institutes and teachers worldwide can teach Russian and Urdu

over Zoom or Teams. Existing language institutions in Pakistan have been refurbished and improved to meet current teaching and pedagogical criteria (Malik et al., 2022). However, these language centres and institutes do not recognise Russian as a foreign language (RFL), and only a few institutions have created Russian language teaching departments. Awareness of the Russian language is only beginning to grow, but a lack of Russian language teachers and bilingual Russian-Urdu materials is compounding the problem. In this context, analyzing, examining, and assessing Russian language courses provided in Pakistan is critical. It is also vital to define and emphasise the characteristics of methodological research conducted in Russian classes in languages and with a Pakistani audience. This article analyses the execution of Russian language education programmes in Pakistan using the methodology devised by the Pushkin State Russian Language Institute for evaluating Russian language courses.

The goal of instructing foreign non-philology pupils in Russian is to enable them to speak Russian effectively to express themselves, comprehend their interlocutors, and replicate and interpret written and spoken material. Learning Russian for professional reasons allows non-philology university students to know their future professions, communicate professionally in a workplace, and readily adjust to consistently changing situations at work (Ndyay, Nguyen, Grunina, 2020). At present, each Russian institution offers Russian language courses in the Humanities, including other disciplines of study. The Russian language itself, like the different academic disciplines, is a required subject for overseas students attending university preparatory courses, students seeking specialised, bachelor, master, along with doctorate degrees, and trainees. This subject of study is “teaching the Russian language along with other subjects to overseas students, depending upon their professional pursuits and Russian language needs, as well as the duration of study. Russian language instruction is currently structured to meet worldwide standards for the instruction of foreign languages, including linguistic acquisition goals, student needs, learning environments, course time frame, required curriculum, and so on. Currently, the learning objectives in RFL classes are established precisely by the demands of the students. The key distinguishing aspect of Russian language courses given to non-philology students is that they are designed to help students pursue specific academic programmes. The student’s primary purpose is to gain professional knowledge and abilities in an additional language different language from their native language. According to the publication “Russian Communication in the World” by the Russian Federation’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Russian language curriculum profile is available in over 70 countries worldwide. Still, methods of achieving goals are not effective. “This type of foreign language instruction constitutes one of the most complicated scientific terms used for descriptions as well as for working” (Kozdra, 2003). Various studies have reported that teaching Russian as a foreign language deserves attention because it is one of the most popular languages. For example, Saydakhmetova’s research (Saydakhmetova, 2020) suggests that a cluster approach to teaching Russian as a foreign language may be implemented and employed. Increasing interest in the Russian language proved to be

remarkable. However, a lack of focus on improving language-teaching programmes offered at various places saw a decline in interest (Ndyay, Nguyen, Grunina, 2020).

Erofeeva (Erofeeva, 2015) researched teaching approaches and addressed the appropriate methodology for teaching RFL. Based on key findings, this research proved to be one of the engaging studies on teaching the Russian language. For example, various teaching approaches were addressed to recommend appropriate methodology for language teaching. Makarova and her colleagues (Makarova et al., 2020) advocated a phenomenological approach to language research and teaching. This research established an argument in favour of the phenomenological approach while justifying its validity. In the same vein, Nuss and Martelle (Nuss, Martelle, 2022) recommended a task-based approach to teaching RFL. This approach was suggested to overcome the weaknesses of previous approaches. Numerous studies have shown that language teaching approaches remain a focus of research. Likewise, teaching RFL has attracted the attention of world researchers who have provided their insights on methodological issues concerning language teaching. Interesting research conducted by Azimov (Azimov, 2020) describes various characteristics of Russian as a foreign language via e-textbooks and online language courses, reporting advantages and disadvantages in learning. Artoni (Artoni, 2024) researched and recommended improving pragmatic competence while adapting the Russian L2 course books. The study was quite interesting in addressing an unaddressed issue in the language books.

A majority of research studies on RFL offer a balanced approach to teaching RFL. Various results undoubtedly contribute to the existing literature. Keeping this in mind, this survey critically highlights and draws attention to language policy-makers and linguists so they can revisit the offered Russian language programmes in general and in Pakistan in particular.

This study aims to address teaching Russian as a foreign language in higher institutes in Pakistan through a mixed-methods design, which involves conducting interviews and a survey questionnaire. The study critically delves deeper into RFL and its strengths and weaknesses in the offered language programmes in Pakistan. Analysing Russian language courses and their effectiveness in the universities of Pakistan can strengthen the impact of RFL.

Methods and Materials

The study employed a mixed methods design to assess and analyse present Russian language certification and diploma programmes in Pakistan within the widely recognised framework of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia.

This research employs a mixed methods design. The purpose of this approach is to deepen the understanding of Russian as a foreign language.

Interviews provide rich data. In this research, we employed interviews as a tool for qualitative data collection. According to Kallio et al. (Kallio et al., 2016), semi-structured interviews help researchers gain valuable insight into the research conducted. This approach is widely employed in educational research to establish

a balance between flexibility and consistency. Similarly, Bryman (Bryman, 2016) pointed out that semi-structured interviews generate rich data via open responses from the respondents. Keeping these strengths in view, the current study followed this approach to address teaching Russian as a foreign language in Pakistani universities. Another tool for data collection in the study was a questionnaire, which provided a rich perspective from a larger number of respondents.

This research included teachers and students of different higher education institutes in Pakistan where Russian is taught as a foreign language. For the qualitative part, purposive sampling was used to recruit 05 teachers who teach RFL and 10 students enrolled in the offered Russian language programmes. However, 60 participants were invited to take a survey to provide meaningful insights.

The current research follows ethical considerations while interviewing teachers and students. Initially, a consent form was distributed to seek their willingness to participate. Participants were informed that their information would be kept anonymous. During the research process, if they want to withdraw from their provided data, they have the right to do so.

Results

Exploring teachers' and students' narratives through interviews and a questionnaire to analyze the potential of Russian language instruction in Pakistan brought some significant results.

The study indicated that teachers and students have positive attitudes about RFL. This key finding aligns with some research studies. More importantly, the study identified that participants had a strong inclination towards international opportunities while learning the Russian language, as narrated by a teacher participant, 'I see RFL as one of the international connections in academia'. They see their future secure while learning and teaching it.

Another key study result is the pedagogical challenges narrated by the study participants. They said that teaching RFL is challenging and rewarding. They also expressed the nature and difficulty of the Russian language. In higher institutes in Pakistan, English holds a high place and is a medium of instruction. This insight from teachers and students about the Russian language is quite surprising and gratifying, as they see RFL as an international opportunity for collaboration.

Despite language difficulties, Pakistani students show keen interest in learning RFL. This recalls Salekhova et al.'s (Salekhova et al., 2018) results of research insights reported.

The study also recorded an excellent level of motivation and expectations about RFL: teachers and students are motivated to promote the teaching of RFL in Pakistan. Interview responses reveal students' passion for RFL. More importantly, the survey results indicate main areas such as international employability, higher education in Russian, cultural awareness, and research purposes. This shows that Pakistani students have a strong passion for the Russian language, cultural heritage, and scholarship.

The qualitative and quantitative data results confirm and validate that Pakistani teachers and students have a positive attitude toward Russian as a foreign language. They narrated their keen interest in learning the language and seeing it as a source of international jobs and scholarship opportunities, as well as cultural awareness and research projects.

Discussion

The study explored teachers’ and students’ narratives (table 1, 2) through interviews and a questionnaire, revealing significant insights into the potential of Russian language instruction in Pakistan. The following tables showcase the teachers’ responses about Russian as a foreign language. The Russian language mentors share their experiences and show their attitude and motivation towards the Russian language programme in Pakistan.

Table 1

Teachers’ Narratives	
Themes	Narratives
Attitude towards Russian as a foreign language (RFL)	I think Russian language is a gateway to global opportunities (Teacher, 3). Students should learn Russian language because it helps them in getting a good job (Teacher, 5). Russian is one of the best languages in the world, but it is also complicated in structure (Teacher, 4). Teaching Russian as a foreign language is necessary for Pakistani students because it opens up many opportunities (Teacher, 3). I am passionate about teaching Russian. My goal is to expand the international circle of people who promote foreign languages in Pakistan (Teacher, 1)
International collaboration	I see RFL as one of the international connections in academia, as we promote other languages like English, Chinese, and Turkish, so why shouldn’t we pay much attention to Russian language? let us do it (Teacher, 2). Through teaching it, we strengthen our academic links and initiate some language programmes (Teacher, 1). Russia has been on good terms with Pakistan, so I think we can do much more to start exchange language programmes to facilitate our students enrolled in language courses (Teacher, 4)
Pedagogical challenges	In teaching Russian, there is a great need for certified language teachers who can teach well (Teacher, 5). I always notice teaching Russian language is complicated because it has a complex structure, and to deal with those structural complexities, a learned instructor is required (teacher, 2). Teaching foreign languages is not an easy job, so is the case with RFL (Teacher, 4). There aren’t many materials. The university provides essential textbooks; however, bilingual Russian-Urdu resources are not available to us (Teacher, 4). I always notice that our students find it challenging to practice RFL. Additionally, there aren’t enough electronic media or online tools available to improve Russian language (Teacher, 2)
Nature of language	Russian syntax, particularly instances as well as verb conjugations, is extremely intricate. I emphasise practical uses, such as speaking activities, since without sufficient practice, it can be challenging for learners to remember intricate grammatical regulations (Teacher, 1). I see that students lack an authoritative basis in understanding grammar, and a few of them conflict, particularly with the instances (Teacher, 2). Russian language is considered difficult to learn what students say (Teacher, 5)

Source : compiled by H. Pathan, I. Bakhsh.

The narratives include major themes about Russian as a foreign language. They reported their positive attitudes towards language, international collaboration,

pedagogical challenges, and the nature of language learning. Furthermore, the following table indicates students’ interview responses who learn the Russian language. They narrate their experiences and attitudes towards the language.

Table 2

Students’ Narratives	
Themes	Narratives
Attitude towards Russian as a foreign language (RFL)	Understanding Russian is crucial for my future as an international student (Participant, 01). Being able to interact alongside Russian academia as well as ambassadors could prove beneficial because Russia is a major player in global affairs (Participant, 3)
International opportunities	I see RFL as an international gateway to my career (Participant, 4). I love to learn Russian alongside English because I want to get a job in Russia (Participant, 5). I struggle to overcome the difficulty of Russian language, however, I deserve more trained faculty (Participant, 5). I simply love RFL and I enjoy learning to get a scholarship in Russian universities (Participant, 4)
Difficulty of RFL	Russian language is difficult to learn (Participant, 8). Grammar, syntactic structure, and morphology are difficult to master (Participant, 7). I see it as a difficult language; however, learning foreign languages is my passion (Participant, 10). Language rules for complex and hard to follow (Participant, 6)
Lack of certified Russian language teachers (RLT)	In my Russian language course, I see a lack of qualified instructors (Participant, 4). Foreign language programmes in our universities require qualified mentors (Participant, 6). We have teachers who teach us, but they have no international certification (Participant, 9)
Motivation and expectation	I feel motivated to learn Russian (Participant, 1). Learning Russian language needs intrinsic motivation. I have a passion for it (Participant, 7). I learn it to teach it (Participant, 2). I hope to master it. What thrives me about Russian language is its scope in the world (Participant, 4)

Source : compiled by H. Pathan, I. Bakhsh.

The above table of students’ responses reveals their inclination toward Russian as a foreign language. The dominant themes include a positive attitude, international opportunities, language difficulty, lack of qualified mentors, and motivation and expectations from learning Russian. The survey questionnaire was also distributed to support the qualitative data. The table 3 below shows percentage of participants and their motivation and expectations.

Table 3

General Survey of Students about RFL	
Main Categories	Percentage
Higher Education in Russia	63.06
Job Opportunities	17.46
International Employability	13.36
Cultural awareness about Russia	3.72
Research Purpose	3.40

Source : compiled by H. Pathan, I. Bakhsh.

The results of the participants’ survey show that they learn Russian as a foreign language to get opportunities in Russia for higher education. Keen interest in learning a language reveals that students prefer the Russian language programme.

Most students learn the Russian language for job opportunities and international employability. This shows students' pragmatic attitude towards RFL. The less rated sections in the above table are cultural awareness and research purpose.

The study showed that teaching Russian as a foreign language has not been without pedagogical challenges. In Pakistani educational scenarios, teaching the Russian language has received less attention because English is considered a language of power and privilege; however, the Russian language is unlikely to be considered a passport to success like the English language. The findings of the current study classify challenges into pedagogical and institutional. As cited above, one of the pedagogical challenges in teaching the Russian language in Pakistan is the unavailability of professionally qualified teachers. Most available teachers are either non-native speakers with a low level of proficiency or native Russian speakers without proper teaching qualifications (Gavrishyk, 2023). This leads to pedagogical inconsistencies as non-native teachers may struggle to handle higher linguistic subtleties, and native speakers may not have methodological skills for teaching foreign languages. With the lack of systematic teacher training and professional development, the quality of teaching is also compromised, impacting learners' capacity to achieve fluency in Russian.

Whereas commonly instructed foreign languages like English or Chinese have a unified national curriculum in Pakistan, Russian curriculum needs revision. Every institution, whether a university or a language center, independently develops its syllabus, course goals, and examination criteria, contributing to stark differences in teaching standards and learning achievements.

Russian language education in Pakistan needs a more holistic approach to resolve the issues of curriculum standardization, technological integration, and teacher training. To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Russian language education programmes in the country, this mixed-methods research recommends some important solutions to the successful implementation of RFL courses at universities in Pakistan: One solution to promote Russian language education is to secure government support through state-funded programmes, student scholarships, and cultural exchange opportunities (Torresin, 2023).

The use of web platforms and multimedia technologies has transformed language learning worldwide, with learners experiencing interactive learning, native-language material, and ease of study. However, Russian language learning in Pakistan remains predominantly rooted in traditional, classroom-style learning, with minimal technology-based learning solutions. More digital resources, such as online language labs, AI learning apps, and virtual exchange programmes with Russian-speaking students, would greatly influence student interest and language proficiency (Sims, 2017). Studies show that multimedia-based language learning enhances retention rates and accelerates fluency, particularly in environments where direct interaction with native speakers is not feasible. Creating a visual touch by adding video lectures, interactive exercises, and gamification modules to Russian language courses offered in Pakistan might make learning the language more engaging and accessible.

In Pakistan, traditional teaching frameworks dominate Russian language training, with little incorporation of modern, technologically advanced methods. Although the conventional strategies are employed frequently, the method implemented in classrooms is influenced by multiple factors, e.g., instructor expertise and institutional resources. The Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), which stresses grammatical structure mastery and rote vocabulary learning, is a commonly used strategy (Abbasi et al., 2025). Although this approach gives students a solid foundation in reading and writing, it is less successful in fostering conversational ability since it often overlooks oral fluency and natural interaction. Despite its limitations, given that there are few native-speaking teachers and no immersive linguistic environments, GTM remains the primary teaching approach used in most Pakistani institutions. Communicative Language Teaching is another teaching method that is used less frequently. This approach emphasizes interaction-based learning and encourages students to participate in real-world discussions and hands-on communication activities. However, as authentic conversational practice can be challenging to arrange in non-immersion contexts, Pakistan's lack of native Russian-speaking educators makes it more difficult to utilize CLT successfully. Furthermore, English or Urdu are frequently used as support languages in classroom discussions, which can limit students' ability to learn Russian naturally. A few universities have access to technology, like NUML, and utilise the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM). This method uses controlled auditory exposure, repetition activities, and recorded dialogues to reinforce language patterns while focusing on pronunciation and listening comprehension skills. Although ALM has been shown to improve spoken fluency and phonetic accuracy, its use can often be constrained by the availability of multimedia resources, language labs, and qualified teachers who can effectively integrate digital technologies into the teaching and learning process (Torresin, 2023).

Teaching of Russian as a foreign language has not been without challenges. In Pakistani educational scenarios, teaching the Russian language has received much resistance because it is not considered a passport to success like the English language. This review classifies challenges into pedagogical and institutional. One of the biggest challenges in teaching the Russian language in Pakistan is the unavailability of professionally qualified teachers. Most available teachers are either non-native speakers with a low level of proficiency or native Russian speakers without proper teaching qualifications (Gavrishyk, 2023). This leads to pedagogical inconsistencies as non-native teachers may struggle to handle higher linguistic subtleties, and native speakers may not have methodological skills for teaching foreign languages. With the lack of systematic teacher training and professional development, the quality of teaching is also compromised, impacting learners' capacity to achieve fluency in Russian.

There are no standardized framework guidelines, and differences in teaching approaches, vocabulary usage, and grammatical focus cause students to have difficulties moving between programmes or attaining a uniform level of linguistic proficiency. A nationally standardized curriculum would improve consistency in Rus-

sian language education, assuring that students from various institutions learn similar skills and knowledge. Another major problem is the unavailability of contextually appropriate and accessible learning materials. A massive deficit of bilingual Russian-Urdu textbooks and online resources complicates language learning for Pakistani students (Vyazovskaya, Danilevskaya, Trubchaninova, 2020). Most existing materials are either English-speaking learner-oriented or targeted at various levels of linguistic proficiency and thus incompatible with the requirements of local students. Moreover, multimedia tools and online resources for learning Russian are still in short supply, restricting students' opportunities to practice language skills outside the classroom. Increasing localized learning materials, digital platforms, and interactive resources would greatly enhance accessibility and motivation in Russian language courses.

In addition to pedagogical and curriculum issues, cultural views and institutional limitations are also responsible for inhibiting the expansion of Russian language programmes in Pakistan. Russian is not commonly regarded as a demanding language, which results in poor student interest and enrollment in academic institutions. Furthermore, the lack of exchange programmes, study-abroad experiences, and scholarships with Russian universities also deters students from taking the language at an advanced level. Other languages, like Chinese and German, have government-sponsored exchange programmes that improve linguistic exposure and career opportunities for students. Moreover, cultural exchange programmes and institutional linkages with Russian universities can considerably increase motivation and enrollment in Russian language classes.

Russian language education in Pakistan needs a more holistic approach to resolve the issues of curriculum standardisation, technological integration, and teacher training. To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Russian language education programmes in the country. This critical survey recommends some important solutions to the successful implementation of RFL courses at universities in Pakistan: one of the solutions to promote Russian language education is to secure government support through state-funded programmes, student scholarships, and cultural exchange opportunities. The Chinese language education programmes in Pakistan are the prime example, and they are supported by government-backed funding. The same support is required for the Russian language expansion. Several studies have suggested that state-sponsored funding significantly increases student participation and interest in foreign language courses, as observed in the education collaboration of China with Pakistan under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (Torresin, 2023). A similar approach can involve bilateral agreements between Russia and Pakistan. One of the most significant problems in Russian language teaching as a foreign language in Pakistan is the lack of standardised curricula in different institutions. Unlike widely taught foreign languages such as English, Arabic, and Chinese, there is no standardised teaching system for the Russian language. Research indicates that countries with standardised RFL curricula, such as members of the European Union, achieve higher levels of student performance (Torresin, 2023).

The lack of qualified and professional Russian language instructors remains Pakistan's biggest obstacle to the effective use of Russian language learning. Most instructors lack RFL training education, negatively impacting instructional quality and participation in class (Walter et al., 2020). Teacher exchange programmes are pivotal for enhancing teaching capability and cultural exposure. Cooperation with Russian higher education institutions and language centers — such as Moscow State University and the Pushkin State Russian Language Institute — would assist training workshops, certification courses, and intensive classroom immersion for Pakistani educators. Studies on teacher training courses in Central Asian and Eastern European countries indicate that “direct exposure to native pedagogy” improves the quality of foreign language teaching (Leaver, Willis, 2004). Implementing such programmes within Pakistan would help develop a stronger pool of better-qualified and more capable teachers.

The use of web platforms and multimedia technologies has transformed language learning worldwide, with learners experiencing interactive learning, native-language material, and ease of study (Sims, 2017). However, Russian language learning in Pakistan remains predominantly rooted in traditional, classroom-style learning, with minimal technology-based learning solutions. More digital resources, such as online language labs, AI learning apps, and virtual exchange programmes with Russian-speaking students, would greatly influence student interest and language proficiency (Ndyay, Nguyen, Grunina, 2020). Studies show that multimedia-based language learning enhances retention rates and accelerates fluency, particularly in environments where direct interaction with native speakers is not feasible. Creating a visual touch by adding video lectures, interactive exercises, and gamification modules to Russian language courses offered in Pakistan might make learning a language more engaging and accessible.

Teaching Russian as a foreign language (RFL) might emerge as a demanding language programme in higher institutes in Pakistan. This emergence can easily be met while making some changes in the existing language courses taught at various institutes in Pakistan. Initially, there is a need to revisit offered programmes and revise existing curricula and course contents. Russian language experts can revamp the existing language courses in Pakistan. To promote Russian as a foreign language, language experts and policymakers might rethink and reimagine available courses in the era of AI. Through this joint venture, the language programmes will remain practical and advantageous to enrolled learners and will find positive outcomes in learning the Russian language.

Conclusion

The study aimed to analyse teaching Russian as a foreign language in higher institutes in Pakistan. Russian language teachers, as well as students who learn the RFL programme, showed passion, keen interest in learning the language. Through this, teachers' experiences of teaching RFL were recorded, which showed a positive inclination to the language, however, they also narrated some pedagogical challenges

in implementing the existing Russian language course. Furthermore, the study indicated keen interest of Pakistani students and their positive attitude towards RFL because they presume it as a path towards their international chances for scholarships and employability. Despite some pedagogical challenges in teaching RFL, survey results confirmed Pakistani students' passion for the Russian language and culture. The research highlights the significance of teaching RFL in Pakistan.

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Научная статья


Преподавание русского языка в Пакистане: анализ программ и стратегии развития

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Аннотация. Приведен критический обзор программ преподавания русского языка, предлагаемых ведущими пакистанскими учебными заведениями. Цель исследования состоит в выявлении преимуществ и недостатков учебных программ по русскому языку в Пакистане. Основной метод исследования — критический анализ существующих программ подготовки к сдаче сертификационных экзаменов на уровень владения русским языком в Пакистане. В качестве материала исследования использованы учебные программы по русскому языку для образовательных учреждений Пакистана. Проанализированы ключевые аспекты курсов русского языка, включая их статус, место проведения, продолжительность, учебные материалы, кадровое обеспечение, содержание и целевую аудиторию. Особое внимание уделено текущему состоянию преподавания русского языка в Пакистане, основным проблемам, с которыми сталкиваются как преподаватели, так и студенты, а также методологическим подходам, применяемым в образовательном процессе. Исследование включает анализ институциональных и педагогических трудностей, таких как нехватка квалифицированных преподавателей, отсутствие единых учебных программ и дефицит учебных материалов на русском и урду. В заключении предложены возможные стратегии для успешного внедрения преподавания русского языка как иностранного в пакистанских вузах, включая стандартизацию учебных программ, расширение международного сотрудничества и развитие методического обеспечения.

Ключевые слова: пакистанские учебные заведения, русский язык, вызовы в образовании, совершенствование программ, обучающие курсы

Вклад авторов: Патхан Х. — концепция исследования, методология исследования, написание текста статьи и анализ программ; Бакш И. — сбор и обработка материала, написание части текста — анализ полученных данных, написание части текста, составление обзора литературы.

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