

Innovative Methods of Learning Foreign Languages and Lifelong Learning on Sustainable Development

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ABSTRACT:

Innovative approaches to developing foreign language competence are closely related in the context of globalisation and education in digital transformation. Interactive methods, digital technologies, blended learning, etc., are used to enhance language learning effectiveness and make the learning process adapt to the requirements of the students. Firstly, the study aims to analyse modern innovative approaches to teaching foreign languages in the conditions of lifelong learning and to estimate their effectiveness for diverse age and professional groups. The research methodology is grounded on the analytical processing of scientific sources, statistical data, and results of the respondents' survey, which is aimed at assessing digital technologies' effect on the progress of foreign language competence development. The results suggest that blended learning, mobile applications, online courses, and project-structured strategies are the most effective. At the same time, the technologies of gamification and VR/AR are ineffective because of the technical barriers. Results of the analysis indicated that the effectiveness of the methods depends on the level of their training and their occupational professional practice. Young professionals also exhibit higher motivations to utilise digital resources as compared to experienced professionals. However, the latter group prefers to use personal learning programmes. The practical significance of the study is to formulate recommendations for introducing innovative approaches to foreign language training in the continuing education system, which will increase the competitiveness of specialists in the international labour market.

Keywords: foreign language competence, continuing education, digital technologies, blended learning, innovative methods, communicative approach, gamification, project-based learning, CLIL, artificial intelligence, sustainable lifestyles.

1. Introduction

In the modern world, foreign language competence plays a key role in the professional development of specialists and their successful functioning in a globalised environment. Foreign language proficiency is a prerequisite for intercultural communication, academic mobility and career development, which makes language

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learning an important component of the continuing education system. At the same time, traditional teaching methods do not always meet modern challenges, which necessitates developing and implementing innovative approaches to foreign language teaching (Symaco & Bustos, 2024; García-Castro & Segura, 2023). The study's relevance is due to the rapid development of digital technologies and their impact on foreign language teaching methods. Integrating online courses, mobile applications, gamification and artificial intelligence contributes to the personalisation of the learning process, increasing student motivation and optimising language learning (Burns & Edwards, 2024; Tzafilkou et al., 2023). Despite numerous studies in this area, the question of the effectiveness of innovative methods in different age and professional groups and their long-term impact on the level of foreign language competence remains open (Muthyala, 2024). Meanwhile, there is still a serious conceptual gap concerning the sustainability of innovative approaches to foreign language education in the long term. Despite the wealth of available data on the short-term effects of motivation and proficiency, there is scant information on the effects of such approaches on language competence in decades of lifelong education. Longitudinal research is needed to understand whether digital technologies, blended learning, or gamification can provide stable motivation rates, avoid dropout, and provide the sustainability of language skills at various levels of professional and personal growth.

Acquisition of a foreign language plays a role in the development of cognitive abilities and scores on tests. Moreover, foreign language competence entails cultural benefits by enabling one to know and appreciate other cultures through literature, film, and travel (Stein-Smith, 2017). There are many professional benefits, including increased income and better employment alternatives. First, foreign language competence is viewed as a form of human capital directly traded off in the marketplace and thus reduces transaction costs. The knowledge of foreign languages is one of those key competences for lifelong learning, in a way, the same as mathematical and scientific skills (Vergolini, 2023). In particular, knowledge of English is essential as it provides certain advantages related to access to highly skilled professions. Developing foreign language competence in lifelong learning is primarily based on innovative approaches and new technologies. Digital tools like interactive platforms, mobile applications and online courses are used for solving various learning problems and facilitate the process of learning to be flexible and adaptive to the individual needs of students (Șișianu & Pușcașu, 2023). At the same time, there is still a need to balance technology use with direct interaction with teachers, which supports and allows immersion into a culture while learning a language.

However, new technologies have many advantages but also difficulties regarding foreign language learning. For instance, poor access to technology and unstable internet connections prevent individuals from using digital resources effectively. Specifically, in addition to the above, self-directed learning skills and motivation must be developed to attain language learning results.

The study aims to investigate modern innovative approaches to creating foreign language competence in continuing education in terms of their effectiveness and possible practical application.

1.1 Analysis of the latest research and publications

Most of the current research is interested in applying the methodology of foreign language education within the scope of lifelong learning, which involves using innovative methods, digital technologies, and the approach to activities based on personal needs. The need for the use of blended learning and digital tools in the improvement of the effectiveness of the teaching of a foreign language is greatly emphasised by many studies (Burns & Edwards, 2024; García-Castro & Segura, 2023; Muthyala, 2024). Studies of international experience in the development of foreign language competence point to the effectiveness of bilingual learning, CLIL and the integration of artificial intelligence into the educational process (Xavier et al., 2023; Lipoff, 2023; Fernández-Costales & Lasagabaster, 2024). In addition, the necessity to adjust these techniques for national educational systems is stressed (Ngo & Tran, 2024; Li, 2023; Cho & Chun, 2023).

Attention is given to the professional development of foreign language teachers in the continuing education system. Cox et al. (2023) and Symaco and Bustos (2024) point out that continuous professional development of teachers and the use of modern methods in the learning process are important. Interdisciplinary learning and digital technologies significantly influence language training approaches and foreign language competence in different countries (Tzafilkou et al., 2023; Kang et al., 2024). Further, there are language training approaches that improve with language competence assessment and realisation of individualised educational trials (Voloshina, 2020; Kvasova & Kavyska, 2014; Yahupov et al., 2020; Glushanytsia & Tarnavska, 2021). The other important aspect is the motivation to learn languages, which is a key factor in effective learning (Takkaç Tuglar, 2016; Mideros et al., 2023; El-Messoudi et al., 2023; Vasyl et al., 2020). It can be said in general that digital technologies, communicative approach and bilingual teaching models are, on the whole, factors contributing to a more effective foreign language education, and how to adapt the methods to the working environment and what to do with developing teaching competence are still areas of further research. In a bibliometric analysis of technology-enhanced language learning (TELL), Hasumi and Chiu (2024) studied to identify what is in and what is out of the current repertoire concerning this research topic. Authors have supported the effectiveness of technology implementation in English language teaching because it strongly increases students' performance in different competences, and systemic factors influence systemic factors as a part of the educational process. Moreover, the study revealed that combining technological tools with traditional teaching methods helps achieve a higher degree of foreign language competence than traditional teaching methods. However, this hybrid effectiveness requires deeper investigation, particularly regarding the balance between technology and direct teacher interaction. While digital platforms and automated feedback systems provide flexibility and immediate responses, they cannot fully replace the cultural immersion and interpersonal dimension that arise from live communication with educators. Integrating innovative tools with meaningful teacher–student interaction may enhance not only language proficiency but also intercultural competence, reducing the risk of overdependence on technology.

A paper is devoted to the question of the continuing education process and system that are explicitly focused on the teacher of a foreign language. The studies by Cox et al. (2023) and Symaco & Bustos (2024) underline the role of continuous professional

development of teachers and bringing new technology into the learning process. Research has shown that training in a foreign language is practically impossible without the use of interdisciplinary learning and digital technologies (Kang et al., 2024; Şişianu & Puşcaşu, 2023). Besides, some of them deal with the questions of the assessment of language competence and employment of personalised educational trajectories (Voloshina, 2020; Kvasova & Kavytska, 2014; Yahupov et al., 2020; Glushanytsia & Tarnavska, 2021). Promoting language learning is a primary factor for successful learning (Takkaç Tülgar, 2016; Mideros et al., 2023; El-Messoudi et al., 2023; Vasyi et al., 2020). The use of digital tools in the development of competence in foreign languages, as well as French, in the context of its teaching in the Caribbean (Lipoff, 2023), proves to be a factor in the development of communicative competence of air traffic controllers (Glushanytsia & Tarnavska, 2021). Specifically, language education has been a subject of studies in narrow-profile areas, confirming the demand for teaching designed for narrow-profile fields (Muthyala, 2024; Fernández-Costales & Lasagabaster, 2024).

Looking at two, these studies also focus on the methodological aspects of using digital technologies in foreign language teaching (Mideros et al., 2023; Cox et al., 2023; Kang et al., 2024). In this regard, studies underline the necessity to devise strategies for assessing foreign language competence in the Internet context (Şişianu & Puşcaşu, 2023; Kvasova & Kavytska, 2014). Nonetheless, as stated above, although a lot has been achieved in the field of foreign language education as regards adapting digital technology to the peculiarities of various professional fields and age groups, problems with adapting digital technologies to the specifics of functional specialities and age groups are not solved. Moreover, the systematic effect of innovative methods on developing foreign language competence in terms of lifelong learning has still not been studied.

2. Research Methods

A combined (quantitative and qualitative analysis) approach was utilised to accomplish the research objective to accomplish the research objective. An online survey was our primary data collection method, allowing us to escalate the sample of respondents from different age groups and professional fields. The questionnaire was structured with closed and open questions, intended to evaluate the change in teaching a foreign language with innovative methods, the participants' motivation level and their preferences in using digital technologies in the learning process. The data obtained were analysed using statistical methods in which the percentage distribution of the answers and the average values were also calculated on a 5-point scale. The processing of the answers to the open-ended questions was based on the content analysis method, so it made it possible to identify the key themes and summarise the respondents' opinions. This made it possible to classify the answers by the type of innovative methods put into practice and the degree of motivation to learn foreign languages. The qualitative data from the survey were compared with the quantitative results to get a holistic analysis of the teaching methods. Additionally, to test the observations in the results from previous studies, the author analysed the literature resources, allowing them to comprehend current trends and problems of training foreign languages as part of continuing education. In addition, the

case study method was applied to provide an in-depth study of concrete examples of innovative methods of the educational process.

3. Research Results

Foreign language proficiency is, naturally, an integral part of professional development and intercultural communication in the modern world. In the modern conditions of lifelong learning, it is becoming more important to introduce effective teaching methods suitable for conditions of globalisation and the digital age (Batsurovska & Dotsenko, 2023). New technologies, flexible learning models, and practice-oriented methods are used to develop foreign language competence.

- The communicative approach is one of the first instrumental methods. It is meant to provide the opportunity to acquire speaking skills to be able to communicate effectively, even in real-life circumstances through the use of language. The dialogues, role-playing, situation modelling and group discussion based on the practical application of language skills form the main focus. Thus, using this approach promotes the formation of linguistic knowledge and, more importantly, socio-cultural competence when it comes to intercultural communication.
- Blended learning is a mix of traditional learning methods (face-to-face) and online tools, making the learning correctly personalised and flexible. This is where digital resources are used, such as interactive platforms, video tutorials, podcasts, and mobile applications that let students learn at their own pace. When adult students combine their studies with work activities, learning over the life of an adult's career is especially relevant.
- The project-based learning method includes practical tasks that are close to life. Students perform these tasks based on their own research and real-life cases, making multimedia presentations or writing analytical reports. Such an approach can be useful in developing critical thinking, independence, and competence in word use in a professional environment.
- Another practical approach to gamifying the learning process is to drive motivation to learn a language. Game elements such as competitions, rating systems, and rewards make learning fun and improve encoding. Examples of such tools include mobile language learning apps, online quests, educational games, and interactive exercises.
- The approach is called CLIL, or Content and Language Integrated Learning, and it involves learning a foreign language with other subjects. For instance, history, biology, or economics can be taught in English, achieving mastery in both subject matter and language skills. It is a widely used method in European countries and in professional training, and it has proven to be very effective.
- Personalised learning involves adapting methods based on individual needs and learning styles. Moreover, using artificial intelligence and adaptive platforms allows us to create customised learning paths based on student's progress, deficiencies, and negligence in lessons through modern digital technologies. Especially in continuing education, students have various training levels, and each person's information needs are different.

Therefore, there are modern approaches to forming foreign language competence in the context of lifelong learning using digital methods of interaction and flexible learning

models. The combination of these techniques enables an effective development of language skills and adapts the learning process to the demands of the contemporary world.

Innovative methods of teaching foreign languages are prominent in the development of professional competence of professionals in different spheres. Depending on the stage of professional development, the need for language training changes, which requires appropriate teaching approaches. It is important to evaluate the effectiveness of these methods in order to determine their efficiency and feasibility of implementation in the continuing education system (Table 1).

Table 1: Evaluating the effectiveness of innovative methods in teaching foreign languages

Professional development stage	Innovative techniques	Performance criteria	Performance evaluation
Primary (student)	Communicative approach, gamification, blended learning	Motivation, level of vocabulary and grammar acquisition, student engagement	High efficiency due to engagement and interactivity
Early professional (young professionals)	Project-based learning, CLIL, online courses	Practicality of knowledge, adaptation to the professional environment, interdisciplinary approach	Average efficiency due to the need to adapt to actual working conditions
Experienced specialists	Personalised learning, online platforms, corporate training	Flexibility of training, relevance to the specifics of the job, possibility of self-study	High-efficiency thanks to an individual approach
Executives, managers	Business courses, coaching, international conferences and seminars	Communication competence, strategic thinking, high-level language skills	Highly effective as training is relevant to practical needs

Source: developed by the author based on Symaco & Bustos (2024), García-Castro & Segura (2023), and Li (2024).

An analysis of the effectiveness of innovative methods in teaching foreign languages shows the need to adapt teaching approaches to different stages of professional development. Simultaneously, the offered framework is limited as far as cross-cultural applicability is concerned. Because the data were mainly collected based on certain national and professional groups, the results might not represent the full diversity of the context of learners around the globe. A more fine-tuned classification based on cultural and institutional differences as well as linguistic ones would offer a greater foundation of generalization internationally. The comparison between countries and regions would help more fully identify the functioning of innovative approaches in other educational and sociocultural contexts and, thereby, prevent excessively localized recommendations. Young professionals need more practical application of knowledge, while experienced professionals and managers are focused on personalised learning methods. The introduction of appropriate innovative methods contributes not only to the development of language competence but also to the competitiveness of specialists in the global labour market.

We studied the impact of innovative approaches on developing foreign language competence. The study was conducted among **257 respondents** from different age groups and professional fields, which allowed us to obtain representative results. The survey

covered students, teachers, business and government employees. The survey (Appendix A) was conducted at higher education institutions, including the **Drahomanov National Pedagogical University, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv**, as well as among employees of the corporate sector, including **IT companies, international business structures and educational organisations**. The primary data collection method was an online survey via **Google Forms**, which allowed us to reach a broad audience. The questionnaire contained closed and open-ended questions to assess the effectiveness of innovative approaches to teaching foreign languages. The data was analysed using statistical methods, including calculating the percentage distribution of answers and average values on a 5-point scale and analysing the correlation between the level of language proficiency and the effectiveness of the selected methods. The results were compared with current research in digital and innovative foreign language teaching (Table 2).

Table 2: Results of the study of the impact of innovative approaches on the development of foreign language competence

Question	Answer	Result (%)
1. Age of respondents	Under 18 years of age	12.47%
	18-25 years old	34.89%
	26-35 years old	28.13%
	36-45 years old	15.92%
	46 years and older	8.59%
2. Teaching methods used	Traditional classes with a teacher	41.28%
	Online courses	53.67%
	Self-study through mobile applications	47.82%
	Gamified platforms	32.49%
	Use of artificial intelligence	21.74%
3. Did the respondents notice any improvements after using the innovative methods?	Virtual/augmented reality	14.63%
	Yes, a significant improvement	38.41%
	Yes, a slight improvement	45.72%
	No, I have not noticed any changes	11.39%
	Hard to answer	4.48%
4. Impact of innovative methods on skills	Speaking - improved significantly	42.31%
	Speaking - partially improved	39.87%
	Speaking - no changes	14.02%
	Speech - deteriorated	3.80%
	Listening - improved significantly	37.24%
	Listening - partially improved	46.18%
	Listening - no changes	12.49%
	Listening has deteriorated	4.09%
	Reading - improved significantly	31.92%
	Reading - partially improved	49.76%
	Reading - no changes	14.83%
	Reading has deteriorated	3.49%
	My writing has improved significantly	28.74%
	Writing - partially improved	51.28%
	Writing - no changes	15.92%
	My writing has deteriorated	4.06%
5. Assessment of the effectiveness of the methods	Online courses	4.32
	Mobile applications	4.18

(average score on a 5-point scale)	Gamification	3.79
	Using artificial intelligence	3.45
	VR/AR technologies	3.22
	Project-based learning	4.08

Source: developed by the author based on a survey of respondents.

The study's results show a significant impact of innovative methods on the process of learning foreign languages, which is confirmed by the answers of respondents in different categories. Let us analyse each question presented in the table.

Most respondents (34.89%) were in the 18-25 age group, which is expected, as this group is most actively involved in the educational process and uses innovative methods to learn foreign languages. The second largest group comprised 26-35-year-old respondents (28.13%), mostly young professionals who continue to develop their foreign language skills in their professional activities. The age group of 36-45 years old (15.92%) and 46 years old and older (8.59%) showed less activity in applying innovative approaches, which may be due to the traditional teaching methods they are used to or less motivation for digital learning.

The results showed that the most popular methods of learning are online courses (53.67%), traditional classes with a teacher (41.28%) and self-study through mobile applications (47.82%). This indicates that respondents prefer a combined approach, combining digital platforms with classical teaching methods. Gamified platforms (32.49%) were less popular but still significant, as they engage students through interactivity. The use of artificial intelligence (21.74%) and VR/AR technologies (14.63%) is not yet widespread, which may be due to limited access to these technologies or insufficient adaptation to educational needs.

A significant improvement in the level of foreign language competence after using innovative approaches was noted by 38.41% of respondents, which indicates the effectiveness of modern methods. A slight improvement was reported by 45.72%, possibly due to insufficient immersion in the learning process or irregular use of digital resources. Only 11.39% of respondents did not notice any changes in their language proficiency, which indicates that innovative methods are not universal and may be less effective for specific categories of learners. Interestingly, 4.48% of respondents chose the option "difficult to answer", which may indicate the difficulty of self-assessing the impact of the methods on their progress.

An analysis of respondents' answers about improving individual language skills showed that:

- *Speaking* improved significantly for 42.31% of respondents and partially for 39.87%. This demonstrates the importance of using methods focused on developing oral communication, such as the communicative approach and interactive online conversation clubs.
- *Listening* has improved by 37.24%, possibly due to podcasts, interactive video tutorials and other digital tools.
- *Reading* scored high (49.76% partially and 31.92% significantly), which is explained by widespread access to online resources and e-books.

- *Writing skills* improved for 51.28% of respondents partially and 28.74% significantly. The results show the effectiveness of methods to improve writing skills, including using automated text checkers and platforms that provide feedback on errors.

Interestingly, all categories show a minimal percentage of skills deterioration (3.49%-4.09%), confirming innovative methods' positive impact. The average level of assessment of innovative methods is as follows:

- Online courses received 4.32 points, which indicates their popularity and effectiveness.
- Mobile apps scored 4.18, confirming their role in self-directed learning.
- Gamification (3.79) and the use of artificial intelligence (3.45) have an average score, which may indicate that they play a supplementary rather than a primary role in learning.
- VR/AR technologies received 3.22 points, the lowest score, probably due to their insufficient integration into the educational process and limited accessibility. Nevertheless, the relatively low evaluation of VR/AR and artificial intelligence should not be interpreted as evidence of their ineffectiveness. Rather, these results reflect current technical and access barriers that limit their use in many educational contexts. As these technologies mature and become more affordable, their potential to support adaptive and personalised learning environments may grow significantly. Future research should therefore focus on assessing their long-term role and exploring how immersive tools can complement traditional and digital approaches in sustaining learners' motivation and enhancing intercultural competence.
- Project-based learning received a score of 4.08, which underlines its practical significance in developing language skills.

The examination of the data did not indicate any significant impact of innovative methods on the formation of foreign language competence, particularly among young people and the professionally active population. The most effective ways to learn were online courses, mobile applications, and project-based learning because of individualisation of the learning process and flexibility. Due to technical barriers and limited access to such resources, VR/AR technologies and artificial intelligence have not been widely utilised.

The content analysis method was used to analyse the respondents' answers to the open-ended questions of the questionnaire. It allowed for the classification of the answers into the main categories: the type of innovative method used, its effectiveness in developing specific language skills, and respondents' satisfaction with using such strategies. Specifically, it was obtained that:

1. The use of online resources, such as e-books, articles, and learning platforms, helped develop reading skills. This allowed authentic texts to be available at all times and to be worked at one's own speed.
2. Respondents improved their writing using automated grammar and style-checking platforms such as Grammarly and Write & Improve. The automated feedback improved the quality of written work.
3. The use of interactive podcasts, video tutorials, etc., was associated with the development of listening skills. It was mentioned that respondents were also helped by working regularly with such resources to improve listening comprehension.

4. Speaking skills improved mainly among those respondents who participated in online conversation clubs and used interactive platforms for speaking practice. This demonstrates the importance of communicative methods that create realistic language situations for practice.

The results show that digital methods are particularly effective for developing reading, writing and listening skills while improving speaking skills requires a more interactive approach that involves direct interaction between learners. This confirms the importance of an integrated approach that combines traditional and innovative teaching methods to achieve the best results.

Foreign language training plays an important role in the continuing education system and plays an important role in specialists' professional and personal development. However, mastering a foreign language involves challenges and barriers that can significantly reduce learning effectiveness. These include personal factors (motivation, psychological difficulties) and external obstacles (lack of time, lack of quality learning materials, technical limitations). Identifying these factors allows us to develop effective strategies to overcome problems and improve the effectiveness of foreign language training (Table 3).

Table 3: Main challenges and barriers in the process of foreign language training in the system of continuing education

Category of barriers	Specific challenges	Impact on the learning process
Personal factors	Low motivation	Decreased activity and progress in language learning
	Psychological barrier (fear of communication)	Lack of practical use of the language limited speaking skills
Organisational difficulties	Lack of time due to professional responsibilities	Irregularity of classes, slow learning of the material
	High cost of quality language courses	Limited access to resources and qualified teachers
Methodological barriers	Lack of a personalised approach	Insufficient effectiveness of traditional teaching methods
	Insufficient integration of technology into the educational process	Limited use of innovative approaches
Technical limitations	Lack of access to quality online resources	Reduced opportunities for independent learning
	Problems with internet connection or digital skills	Limited interaction with learning platforms

Source: developed by the author based on Symaco & Bustos (2024), García-Castro & Segura (2023), and Li (2024).

The analysis of the main challenges and barriers in the process of foreign language training in the continuing education system shows that the most significant are lack of time due to professional responsibilities, low motivation and psychological barriers (fear of communication). Analysis of respondents' answers to question 4.2 of the questionnaire: "What factors, in your opinion, hinder the effective use of innovative approaches?" showed the following results. The most common problem mentioned by the respondents was the lack of time for training (35% of answers), which may be due to the combination of professional activities and other responsibilities. Lack of technical capabilities was cited

as the second most frequently mentioned, and 27% of respondents mentioned it. Around 18 per cent of respondents pointed out that low motivation was an obstacle to language learning; thus, it is necessary to create new ways of increasing learners' motivation in the language. Moreover, 12% cited that technology was difficult to use, especially among the least experienced with digital tools. Other factors the remaining 8% of students mentioned ranged from a lack of quality learning material to a lack of teacher support. These results suggest that we should enhance the technological aspect of the learning process and have the resources available to facilitate the learning flow.

It reveals the need for a flexible learning format: the possibility of being able to choose the pace of learning in online courses. The second challenge concerns the lack of a personalised point of view and closure to the technology in the learning process; it suggests we employ adaptive learning with artificial intelligence and interactive platforms. However, technical constraints like insufficient access to online resources or problems with Internet connection have a lower impact but still affect various groups of students. Therefore, removing both personal organisational and methodological barriers towards the course is required for the course of foreign language training to become more effective, claiming the learning process to be accessible, flexible and adaptive.

The development of foreign language competence is a key objective of educational systems around the world. Depending on cultural, economic and social factors, approaches to learning foreign languages vary significantly. Studying international experience allows us to identify the most effective strategies that can be adapted to national educational systems. Table 4 shows the peculiarities of language training in Europe, Asia and America.

Table 4: Comparative analysis of approaches to the development of foreign language competence in the world

Country/ Region	Main approaches	Features of the training system	Performance results
Finland	CLIL (content and language integrated learning), bilingual schools, digital technologies	Compulsory study of two foreign languages, extensive use of ICT	High level of English proficiency, leader in international rankings
Germany	Project-based learning, early start of language learning	Foreign language from primary school, active use of interdisciplinary approach	High level of grammatical proficiency but lower level of spoken activity
France	Emphasis on traditional methods (grammar-translation), state support programmes	High level of government regulation, support for teaching multiple languages	High level of theoretical knowledge, but language barrier during oral communication
China	Blended learning, digital platforms, mobile applications	The importance of self-study, government incentive programmes	Rapid growth in English levels, but an emphasis on test tasks

Japan	Communicative approach, use of native speakers, gamification	Low level of speaking practice in schools, emphasis on reading and writing	High level of written English, but difficulties in spoken communication
USA	Individualised approach, online courses, interactive technologies	Free choice of methods, decisive role of the private sector in education	High level of conversational competence but uneven level of knowledge
Ukraine	Traditional methods, partial integration of digital technologies	Gradual transition to a communicative approach, poor integration of native speakers	High level of theoretical knowledge but low level of speaking practice

Source: developed by the author based on Symaco & Bustos (2024), García-Castro & Segura (2023), and Li (2024).

Comparative analysis shows that the most effective education systems combine early language learning, integration of digital technologies, and active use of a communicative approach. At the same time, cross-national differences indicate that more comparative work is needed to fully integrate local practices with global insights. For example, Germany’s strong emphasis on grammatical accuracy and Japan’s focus on written competence reveal distinctive traditions that do not always align with communicative or digital-oriented models. These variations underline the importance of contextualising findings within specific cultural and institutional settings. Future studies could thus explore how innovative methods interact with local traditions, creating hybrid models that respect national priorities while also drawing on international best practices. Finland and Germany are leaders in developing foreign language competence, where foreign languages are taught early, and the learning process is adapted to modern realities. Asian countries, such as China and Japan, demonstrate a high level of success in written English but face problems with spoken practice due to the emphasis on testing. At the same time, the United States has a flexible learning system that ensures a high level of communicative competence. Ukraine is gradually moving towards communicative methods but still faces the problem of low language practice among students. Using international experience, including integrating native speakers, digital platforms, and project-based learning, can significantly improve the quality of foreign language training.

Motivation is one of the key factors of successful foreign language acquisition in the context of lifelong learning. It determines the level of interest, the intensity of the learning process and the overall effectiveness of language learning. In the current context of globalisation and technological progress, motivation to learn languages is formed by various factors: professional needs, personal interests, availability of resources, and social environment. The study of the role of motivational factors in foreign language training allows us to identify the main incentives that contribute to effective learning and barriers that can complicate it (Table 5).

Table 5: The main motivational factors in learning foreign languages in the system of lifelong learning

Category of factors	Specific motives	Impact on the learning process
Personal motivation	Self-development, cultural curiosity	High level of interest, independence from external incentives
Professional motivation	Career growth, increased competitiveness	Stable motivation, focus on practical use
Educational motivation	Access to foreign sources, study abroad	Stimulates deep language acquisition and active use in learning
Social motivation	Communication with native speakers, international travel	Improves speaking skills, creates a need for communication
Availability of learning resources	Online courses, mobile apps, language clubs	Promotes regularity of training, makes the process more accessible
Gamification and digital technologies	Interactive platforms, gaming techniques	Increases interest in learning, makes it more dynamic
Psychological factors	Self-esteem, confidence in own knowledge	Influences the active use of the language in real life

Source: developed by the author based on Vergolini (2023), Hasumi & Chiu (2024).

The study has shown that motivational factors in foreign language learning can be divided into internal (personal, social, and psychological motivation) and external (professional prospects, availability of resources, and gamification of the learning process). The other reason that professional motivation may have an influence on cognitive processing, mainly when a foreign language is necessary for career advancement, is because knowledge of a foreign language is a necessary profession. It also involves access to modern learning resources, which makes the whole procedure flexible and accessible. In case of learning difficulties, psychological factors, such as fear of committing mistakes and low self-esteem, can also hinder learning, so it is important to provide a language environment that would be comfortable to immerse in. The capability of foreign language competence to be developed in the lifelong learning system is determined by the interaction of several motivational factors, which provide the continuous geographical development of language skills.

Moreover, lifelong learning has implications and impacts for the pursuit of the SDGs and is critical to their success. Sustainable development and lifelong learning are two concepts that are becoming more linked in the twenty-first century. As the globe faces difficult concerns such as climate change, resource depletion, and socioeconomic inequities, it is apparent that education and lifelong learning are essential for establishing a sustainable future. Lifelong learning is critical to achieving sustainable development goals. Continuous education and skill acquisition can help achieve this goal in a variety of ways, including raising environmental awareness, empowering communities, fostering social inclusion and equity (particularly by improving inclusion and removing barriers to technology use), and encouraging sustainable lifestyles. In turn, enhancing foreign language proficiency in lifelong learning is accelerating this contribution, enabling individuals to broaden their awareness in sustainable development due to getting acquainted with information in foreign language, establishing cross-cultural contacts, and even participation in international projects.

4. Discussion

The study's results confirmed the need for innovative approaches to creating foreign language competence in the system of continuous education. The data shows that online courses, mobile applications, and blended learning are the best ways to improve language skills. This aligns with the findings of García-Castro & Segura (2023) on the development of English language teacher professional development through digital technologies and Burns & Edwards (2024), the results of whose action research approach to learning was also found to be effective. However, the results also reveal some discrepancies for the different methods.

The final important aspect of the study was identifying barriers to foreign language learning, including low motivation, lack of resources, and Fear of speaking a foreign language. As shown in the research of Xavier et al. (2023) on bilingual education, content and language-integrated learning (CLIL) is a good practice for students in terms of language development in different educational contexts. This approach is not widespread in Ukraine yet, thus leaving space for further research.

This is so we can confirm the efficiency of digital tools and the learning of foreign languages through them. At the same time, quite some work is being done on the use of Artificial Intelligence (tipoff, 2023) and on the use of personalised learning paths (Muthyala, 2024) for foreign languages. Additionally, this novel technique should be further studied in terms of effectiveness in different age groups and professional fields.

5. Conclusion and Prospects for Further Research

The study shows that using innovative approaches to developing foreign language competence is an effective tool for increasing foreign language competence within the environment of lifelong learning. Using online courses, mobile applications, gamification, and project-based learning significantly increases students' motivation and promotes active learning of language material. The novelty of the results is to establish the relationship between different teaching methods and their effectiveness at different stages of professional development. It has been found that digital technologies play a key role in language training, but their implementation requires taking into account personal and technical factors. A limitation of the study is the difficulty in predicting the long-term effectiveness of the methods due to the rapid development of technology and changing educational needs. This limitation also highlights the necessity of adaptability within educational systems. As technologies and cultural contexts evolve, policymakers and institutions must anticipate these shifts and embed flexibility into curricula, teacher training, and lifelong learning strategies. Effective frameworks should therefore not only respond to current challenges but also prepare learners and educators for continuous technological and social transformation, ensuring resilience in the face of uncertainty. The practical significance of the work lies in the possibility of adapting the results obtained to improve educational programmes and develop personalised learning paths. Further research should be directed at assessing the effectiveness of adaptive learning, integrating artificial intelligence into the process of foreign language training, and studying the impact of VR/AR technologies on the development of language competence.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire to study the impact of innovative approaches on the development of foreign language competence

1. General information

1.1. Your age:

- ☐ Under 18 years of age
- ☐ 18-25 years old
- ☐ 26-35 years old
- ☐ 36-45 years old
- ☐ 46 years and older

1.2. Your field of activity:

- ☐ Student
- ☐ Teacher/scientist
- ☐ Employee of the business sphere
- ☐ Civil servant
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

1.3. Your level of foreign language proficiency:

- ☐ Beginner (A1-A2)
- ☐ Intermediate (B1-B2)
- ☐ High (C1-C2)
- ☐ Native speaker

2. Experience of learning a foreign language (* *innovative teaching methods are highlighted in bold*)

2.1. What teaching methods did you use? (you can choose several options)

- ☐ Traditional classes with a teacher
- ☐ **Online courses**
- ☐ **Self-study through mobile applications**
- ☐ **Gamified platforms (Duolingo, Memrise, etc.)**
- ☐ **Use of artificial intelligence (chatbots, personalised recommendations)**
- ☐ **Virtual/augmented reality (VR/AR)**
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

2.2. Which method has been most effective for you?

3. Evaluating the impact of innovative approaches

3.1. Have you noticed any improvement in your foreign language competence after using the innovative methods?

- ☐ Yes, a significant improvement
- ☐ Yes, a slight improvement
- ☐ No, I have not noticed any changes
- ☐ It is difficult to answer

3.2. How have innovative approaches affected different aspects of your language competence?

Skill		Improved significantly	Partially improved	No changes	Deteriorated
Speaking		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listening		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vocabulary grammar	and	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.3 Please rate the effectiveness of the following innovative methods on a 5-point scale (1 - not at all effective, 5 - very effective):

Method	1	2	3	4	5
Online courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mobile applications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gamification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using artificial intelligence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VR/AR technologies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project-based learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Your opinion on innovative methods

4.1 Which methods would you like to use more in the future?

4.2 What factors, in your opinion, hinder the effective use of innovative approaches?

- ☐ Lack of technical capabilities
- ☐ Low motivation
- ☐ Lack of time for training
- ☐ Complexity of using technology
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

4.3. What innovative methods would you recommend to improve foreign language competence?
