

Call for Papers

THE VERY FIRST LESSON IN TEACHING SLAVIC LANGUAGES AS FOREIGN AND HERITAGE LANGUAGES

“It is rarely discussed how students might approach planning their very first lessons.” (Knorr 2015, 23)

The editorial team of *DiSlaw* invites scholars and educators to submit contributions for the upcoming issue on the topic of *“The Very First Lesson”* in teaching Slavic languages as foreign and heritage languages.

DiSlaw is a multilingual journal that publishes articles not only in German and English but also in Bosnian, Croatian, Russian, Serbian, Slovenian, and Ukrainian. The journal is also open to contributions in other Slavic languages.

The aim of this issue is to fill a gap in the field of language-specific education regarding the planning, structuring, and implementation of introductory lessons for beginners in Slavic language teaching. These initial lessons lay the foundation for guided language acquisition and aim to spark interest in learning a Slavic language.

We welcome contributions from teachers, teacher educators, and scholars at universities and pedagogical institutions. In particular, we encourage submissions that combine theoretical insights with practical strategies for motivating language learners.

The following topics may serve as guidance for contributions, though additional questions and perspectives are also welcome:

- ***The Language-Specific Framework of the First Lesson***

Thoughtful and structured planning of the very first lesson in teaching a Slavic language

Teaching basal (linguistic) elements (simple greetings and forms of address, basic self-introduction sentences, first letters and sounds, etc.)

Creating an inclusive, non-intimidating learning atmosphere and managing learners' expectations

- ***The Unique Challenges of Slavic Languages***

Linguistic features such as Cyrillic script (Russian, Ukrainian, Serbian) or complex grammatical systems (cases, gender, verbal aspect, etc.)

The role of phonetics and pronunciation exercises in the first lesson

Developing strategies to help learners overcome fears and anxieties in language learning

- ***Situating Languages in a Cultural Context***

Introducing cultural elements that showcase the diversity of Slavic languages and their geographical distribution

Teaching cultural knowledge without falling into stereotypes or romanticised narratives in the first lesson

Presenting non-Russian contexts and extracurricular learning spaces for the Russian language (e.g. Russian in Ukraine, Central Asia, the learners' hometown, etc.)

- **Practical Approaches and Lesson Plans**

Teaching recipes and best-practice examples for effective introductory lessons (including sample lesson plans)

Strategies for motivating and engaging learners from the very beginning (cf. Nedashkivska & Sivachenko 2017, 78 ff.)

Appealing tools and resources for the first lesson (e.g. interactive tools, apps, audiovisual aids)

- **Multilingual Classrooms and Heritage Speakers**

The use of the target language in the very first lesson

Differentiation strategies for teaching heterogeneous classes (learners who already speak the Slavic language at varying proficiency levels) (cf. Lauersdorf 2000, 499)

- **Language Policy and Curriculum Design**

Guidelines for designing first lessons (cf. Rifkin 2003, 173) in curricula and language policies – do they exist?

Perspectives from educators across different regions and educational institutions (secondary schools, universities, university colleges, adult education centres, etc.)

Please send an **abstract** of less than **250 words** in one of the languages given below to the following address by **April 7, 2025** at the very latest: redaktion-DiSlaw-Slawistik@uibk.ac.at.

Please specify in **which** of the **languages** listed below you are planning to write your paper, add a **working title** to your abstract as well as a **short biographical statement** (institutional affiliation, position / areas of work, research interests), and indicate the **type of contribution**.¹ The assessment grids for abstracts and further information on the overall publication process are available at the following link: <https://www.dislaw.at/index.php/ds/submission>.

Papers as well as a second **abstract in English** need to be submitted by **July 7, 2025**, since the publication of the fourth issue of *DiSlaw* is scheduled for October 2025. The comprehensive guidelines (style sheet, templates) are available at <https://www.dislaw.at/index.php/ds/submission>.

Possible languages of contributions: Bosnian, Croatian, English, German, Russian, Serbian, Slovenian, Ukrainian (other languages upon request).

Past issues can be viewed at <https://www.dislaw.at/index.php/ds/issue/archive>.

Selected references

Chaput, P. (1991). TA training in Slavic languages: goals, priorities, practice. *The Slavic and East European Journal*, 35(3), 390–402. <https://doi.org/10.2307/308657>

Gomide, B.M. (2021). Window on Slavic Studies in Lisbon. Guide to Research and Teaching, *Slavonica* 26:1, 58–75, DOI: [10.1080/13617427.2021.1919824](https://doi.org/10.1080/13617427.2021.1919824)

Kagan, O., Rifkin, B. (2000). *The learning and teaching of Slavic languages and cultures*. Slavica Publishers.

Knorr, P. (2015). *Kooperative Unterrichtsvorbereitung. Unterrichtsplanungsgespräche in der Ausbildung angehender Englischlehrender*. (=Gießener Beiträge zur Fremdsprachendidaktik). narr\francke\attempo.

Lauersdorf, M. (2000). Training teachers of Slavic LCTLs: student profiles and program design. *Linguistics Faculty Publications* 54. https://uknowledge.uky.edu/lin_facpub/54

¹ Scientific-theoretical papers (ST), theory-guided studies from teaching practice (TP) or best practice examples (BP).

Oktray, S., Sadikoglu, S. & Memedova, K. (2018). Methodology of teaching Russian language and literature. *Modern Journal of Language Teaching Methods (MJLTM)* 8(3), 484–490. https://www.academia.edu/69654433/Methodology_of_teaching_Russian_language_and_literature

Nedashkivska, A., Sivachenko, O. (2017). Student motivational profiles: Ukrainian studies at the postsecondary level in Canada. *East/West: Journal of Ukrainian studies*. 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.21226/T23G6C>

Rifkin, B. (2003). Guidelines for Foreign Language Lesson Planning. *Foreign Language Annals*, 36(2), 167–179.

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