



Family Video Language Teaching: Engaging Children in the Educational Process-Saving Kids from Screens.

Ekaterina Gruzova¹

Russian School Kalinka in Luxembourg¹

Abstract

In today's world, the modern brain needs vivid pictures and speed in everything. People need everything now and immediately. This is reflected in all the social media we are all already tangled up in. Language learning in classical ways is also effective, but less in demand due to this very speedy reality. Language teachers also need to keep up with the times and adapt the transfer of knowledge to the fast-paced and modern method. Video is known to be one of the most effective tools in conveying information. Language can also be shown. The new Rainbow Russian project has set itself precisely this goal. It is also the first Russian language course filmed in a family environment where the author's own children were involved as teachers.

Involving children in teaching others has increased their own interest not only in their mother tongue, but also in the creative process itself. This has encouraged them to find new theatrical solutions and scenarios to show a particular grammatical construction. In addition, working together with his mother allowed the eldest son to feel important, to be involved in an interesting cause and to build self-confidence.

The language presentation in the video course does not focus on watching ready-made scenes, often taken from other TV projects or TV series, and not on explaining the rules in front of a video camera at the teacher's blackboard, but on directly addressing the student and demonstrating the application of a particular language construct and the different ways in which it can be used. Showing a word, an adverb, an adjective, a verb, not just its schematic conjugation, is the point. Gestures, intonation, facial expressions, theatrical acting - all these components are concentrated in the Rainbow Russian Language course. Involving children in an educational project, working side by side with a parent helps the child develop not only his or her creative and artistic side, but also psychological, emotional and physical qualities.

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We are all parents here for the most part. How many times have you told yourself that you should devote more time to your children, give them more attention, do something together, maybe just play? After all, they grow up so fast! Time is running out. And now they are teenagers, a difficult age, and many people think that they should have invested in their son or daughter earlier, that they should have found the time. But we always have no time. Work, things to do, meetings...

Strange as it may sound, I am grateful of the lockdown for the opportunity to finally be at home with my family, to spend time with my children. Lockdown played an important role in the birth of my video project and in the involvement of my children, especially my eldest son.

Our children need the constant communication. The isolation is not good for anyone. During lockdown, our children faced this very unpleasant thing and everyone experienced it differently. Of course, we, parents, had to try in every way to keep our children from being depressed, sad and longing for their friends and for communicating with the world around them. My project became a kind of "lifeline" for my very outgoing son. His involvement ignited in him a desire to create, prompted him to take the initiative, to come up with new ideas. Participating in the project became a new kind of communication with the world for him. He even wanted to act as a teacher, and I didn't stop him from doing so. In the beginning, I thought it was just a game for him, that he would get bored and quit, but then he got involved in the process and began to think like a real teacher. He then began to think about how to demonstrate this or that grammatical construction more easily. As you know, there is nothing more difficult than explaining a lesson simply and in a way that is accessible to the student.



My daughter, who is 4 years old, started to repeat after her older brother and she wanted to be an actress too. The older brother has become a positive role model for her. My son was very aware of his responsibility towards his sister, he saw how closely she followed his example in almost everything. Participating in the project not only sparked his interest in educational activities, but also made him reevaluate his own behavior towards his younger sister. He realized that he could influence the development of another person. Let us not forget that we are also talking about a child who is only 10...

Children at the age of 10 are not yet able to substitute emotions; their faces and behaviour are a reflection of their inner state. We cannot force a child to express real happiness if there is no happiness: their eyes are the mirror of their soul, everyone knows that. I say this to make it clear that there has been no pressure on my part and it shows on the screen. Forcing children to do anything is not the solution.

Involving a child in an adult project leads to the growth of their already existing abilities and skills. I will give some examples from my own practice. My son is studying music. Like all normal children, he doesn't like to do his homework and sit at his instrument for long periods of time. Participating in a video project encourages him to improve himself voluntarily. If a lesson is designed with him playing the piano or another instrument, my son will practice on his own and eagerly to show the world what he can do. It is like preparing for a concert, where you can't make a mistake and have to play cleanly. A video shoot is not a concert, you can re-shoot the take, but that doesn't mean you can play it badly... This willingness to volunteer to do better is the most important point in the process of involving children in such projects.

Another example: Physical activity. Many parents find it very difficult to push their children outside to go for a walk and get some fresh air. Children prefer computer screens or video games which they cannot tear themselves away from. We need to show potential virtual pupils the verbs of movement. What are we doing? We pack up and go shooting in the woods or in a park. It often takes about two hours to shoot 3 minutes of video footage. This means that the child spends more than enough time outside. If the minimum per day is 30 minutes, then two hours is a great result. Needless to say, the health of our children is of utmost importance. An active and healthy lifestyle for a child promotes better brain function and normal development. The value of a project like this is also that it takes children outside the home in a double sense. On the one hand, it is a healthy walk in the park with mum, on the other hand, it is playing in front of the camera and in front of other people - it is the beginning of communication with an audience, it is a school for banishing fear of the public, it is about building self-confidence.

Another important aspect of involving children in such a project is improving their mother tongue. We live in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, in a kind of mini world where 70 per cent are from all over the world and only 30 per cent are local. Here every child under the age of 10 speaks at least 4 languages fluently. My children are fully bilingual and speak other languages as well. Maintaining the Russian language in an extra-linguistic environment requires special efforts first and foremost from the parents. Russian schools are also very helpful and they zealously fight for the preservation of the language, but the family is still more important. Living and bringing up children in a foreign language environment, parents have to make great efforts always speaking with their children only in their native tongue everywhere. It is much easier to drop everything and switch to the local language as everyone understands you and you do not fall out of context, you feel like you belong. No-one disputes that integration is very important. But it is very selfish. Children should not be deprived of such a wealth as the knowledge of their mother's or father's native tongue.

Involving a child in a project like this is their first step into the professional world and there is nothing wrong with that! Being a mother's or father's right hand in something has always brought only positive results to the younger generation and has contributed to the accumulation of skills and experience. And if it is also a favorite activity, then the experience is invaluable. Here we are talking about an activity that the child enjoys, that captivates the child and brings fruit to the child. The parent becomes a supporting figure in the child's mind, a partner in a sense, the head of the process, who is interesting to follow. This has an immediate effect on other levels of communication, related to school, friends or even sentimental issues. A parent, by engaging their kids in such activities, creates a strong emotional and psychological base in their mind, a solid ground of parental love and respect, builds a sense of non-singleness, and raises a complete confident person, able to share their knowledge with others with love and respect for those around them.



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