

Cognitive Approach in Teaching Foreign Languages

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Abstract: Currently, the active introduction of cognitive and communication technologies is relevant in the process of teaching a foreign language. A communicative-oriented lesson involves the formation of a system of certain knowledge, skills and abilities, and provides the student with the opportunity to form specific competencies.

Keywords: foreign languages, vocabulary material, linguistic system.

Using a cognitive approach in teaching a foreign language, we can not only differentiate the individual characteristics of students, but also apply various strategies for mastering a foreign language. A serious shortcoming in teaching a foreign language should be considered the inability of students to predict lexical material when constructing their own statements, to highlight the generalizing features necessary for memorization in the material, to associate words thematically, to correctly encode and decode vocabulary material. Psychological research and the practice of learning show that learning is successful when the brain creates its own mental structures, and it slows down if ready-made structures are imposed on it. Therefore, it is necessary not to impose linguistic knowledge, but to help it appear and develop it. It will appear from the needs for communication and self-expression. Therefore, it is preferable to create such needs, to stimulate the interest of students in learning. The process of learning a language should become a process of discovering a language, a process of research and experimentation.

Unfortunately, the misconception that the communication of "ready-to-use" knowledge speeds up the process turns out to be quite persistent in practice. This simple, prosaic reason seriously hinders the application of new teaching methods. Teachers sometimes feel that they do not have time for such a gradual formation of knowledge. Ready to spend time on the formation of skills and abilities, they refuse this stage, which is no less important - the conceptualization of knowledge. Of course, in the beginning, each phenomenon requires a rather lengthy work on the formation of the concept, verification of its correctness, not to mention the formation of the skill of its use. But when the student as a whole has developed ideas about the language system, new phenomena are mastered along the same path, but much faster, without much effort on the part of the student and without additional control from the teacher.

One of the first to formulate the prototype of the cognitive principle of learning was Leo Tolstoy. In his pedagogical articles, he wrote: "It is impossible to teach students the literary language against their will by forced explanations, memorization and repetition. Almost always it is not the word itself that is incomprehensible, but the student does not have at all the concept that the word expresses. The word is almost always ready when the concept is ready. At the same time, the relation of the word to thought and the formation of new concepts is such a mysterious, complex and tender process of the soul that any intervention is a brute, incoherent force that retards the process of development. ... But to consciously give the student a new concept and forms of the word ... is just as impossible and futile as teaching a child to walk according to the laws of balance. Any such attempt does not bring closer, but removes the student from the proposed goal, like a rough hand of a person who, wishing to help a flower bloom, would begin to unfold the flower by the petals and would knead everything around.

Later, the Soviet psychologist, the founder of the cultural-historical school in psychology, Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky, came to the conclusion that all school education "revolves around two processes: awareness and mastery." A foreign language is no exception in this sense. The two sides of the process of foreign language learning are inseparable and reflect the unity of equally important functions inherent in human language.

Language is an instrument of communication, on the one hand, and an instrument of knowledge, on the other. This postulate is consistent with the general understanding of the essence of a person's communicative competence as knowledge, ideas about the language and the ability for speech actions, skills in the speech sphere. These two aspects of language learning - gaining knowledge about the language and gaining knowledge of the language itself, today in the methodology of foreign languages are perceived as equally important processes and serve to form an adequate idea of the linguistic phenomenon, the development of skills to use this phenomenon in real communication. Therefore, the communicative-cognitive approach is recognized as the leading approach to teaching foreign languages in modern conditions.

Cognitiveness (lat. *cognitio*, "knowledge, study, awareness") means the ability for mental perception and processing by a person of external information. The concept of "cognitive processes" is often applied to such processes as "memory", "attention", "perception", "action", "decision making" and "imagination". Although practically no one denies that the nature of cognitive processes is controlled by the brain, and at first glance this is a concept from the field of biological and

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psychological sciences. The theory of cognition is now firmly established in the methodological concepts of teaching, because it is the cognitive processes of cognition that describe human behavior in terms of the information flow and help to understand exactly how the human brain performs the functions of processing new information for itself and its further use. Knowledge, as is known, is the result of a cognitive (cognitive) process. And calling the cognitive approach one of the leading methodological approaches of the modern process of teaching a foreign language, emphasis is placed on taking into account the patterns of the cognitive process in mastering a foreign language and the characteristics of the mental (intellectual-emotional) activity of students.

Thus, in teaching a foreign language, the cognitive approach is reduced to the problem of the optimal organization of students' cognitive actions, corresponding to the natural cognitive behavior of a person. Let's take learning the grammatical side of speech as an example. Indeed, the study of the grammar of the native language occurs more slowly, through overcoming successive errors, erroneous ideas that are natural for a person who first masters the language on a conscious basis. When studying a second - a foreign language, this paradox is overcome faster, since the student already has a linguistic understanding of many things related to language as a system. The development of a new linguistic system in a student takes place through the interaction of internal and external factors. The internal engine of cognition is a conflict - a contradiction between a person's ideas about language and reality. When teaching, the "organizer" of understanding and resolving this conflict is most often the teacher. He should draw the student's attention to the fact of the existence of a contradiction and help resolve it. The activity of a teacher is not an activity of frontal transfer of knowledge. He should be an active mediator who offers problem situations to learners, he is also active in terms of discussion and questions regarding new knowledge. The teacher presents students with samples of a foreign language, helps to structure them, offers types of activities, various, variable cognitive techniques, makes it possible for students to self-evaluate their process in learning. The material will be learned by the students if it has become "their own". And this means that the language is "built" on the basis of individual cognitive activity in the process of language practice.

Thus, language acquisition is the application of consistent systems of cognitive strategies that take into account both the universality of human cognitive activity during its linguistic development in a foreign language, and the individuality of this process. So, the essence of the cognitive approach in teaching a foreign language can be expressed as follows. The organization of the educational process on the path of understanding the new must coincide with the natural path of cognition inherent in the human psyche. That is, the student should be helped to develop flexibility in the application of cognitive strategies, to teach how to apply certain strategies adequately to the task facing him. In practice, the cognitive approach means that the teacher must ensure that the student goes through the natural stages of the cognitive process. To achieve the goals and objectives of mastering vocabulary, taking into account the requirements of the cognitive approach, a special group of exercises is recommended.

The purpose of these exercises is:

- ✓ in creating a cognitive image of a word;
- ✓ in the formation of stable associative links of the word with the situation, subject matter and with other lexical units (development of lexical memory);
- ✓ in the development of students' skills to predict lexical material;
- ✓ in the development of skills to encode lexical information in different ways;
- ✓ in the development of lexical creativity;
- ✓ in the actualization of the cognitive image of the word in order to express the speech intention;
- ✓ in the ability to distinguish in the structure of the meanings of the word senses associated with the culture of the people, and skillfully use this type of vocabulary. Here are some examples of such exercises:

I. Exercises for the development of lexical memory and the creation of a cognitive word.

- Think of words that contain the vowel sound [i:]: For example:

be - been - bean me - meet - meat

see - seat - seed meal - seal - mean

pea - Pete - peat sea - see - meet

bee - been - feet mean - lean - keen

- Name words with a double letter that conveys a consonant sound:

through - fifth - myth thief - booth - tooth

thank-think-thought theater-theory-theft

- Name words with a double letter that conveys a vowel sound:

fool-pool-hook fool-too-book

cook-boot-loopfoot-cool-mood

soon - spoon - moon

➤ Read the words paying attention to their spelling. Write the meanings of the given words:

what - why - where

whip - wheat - while

II. Exercises for the development of linguo-creative thinking

➤ Read the sentences with the same root words and pay attention to their translation:

1. A greater part of the research has been completed.

They parted after they graduated from the Institute.

He divided the apple into two parts.

2. The trees were covered with snow and the forest looked beautiful.

It's raining hard, we must get under cover, quick!

This book needs a new cover.

➤ Make up as many phrases as you can with the following keyword:

Season → warm, vegetables, cold, favorite, holiday.

➤ Choose words in brackets that can be combined with the keyword. Write down phrases and make sentences with them: society (mass media, to entertain, to influence, events, view, spare time, current events, audience, detailed review, subscribers, advertising, to own, satellite).

III. Exercises for predicting words and phrases

✓ Find the end of the proverbs.

✓ Read the titles of some of the articles and say what the articles might be about.

IV. Exercises for encoding lexical material

✓ Carefully study the map of the city and find gas stations in it.

✓ Listen to the words on the topic, match them with the visual images shown in the pictures.

✓ Explain the following terms from the cultural and social life of the UK: double Decker, Webster's Electronic Dictionary, downtown district, no deeper than a crystal brook.

V. Exercises for the development of lexical creativity

➤ Name the lexical units that can be used to characterize the following concepts:

A) London Eye

B) "holidays in England";

C) "parts of the United Kingdom."

✓ Make an associogram on the topic "The main units of the car."

✓ Read several contexts and determine the meanings that the verb "to get" has.

✓ Create a mind map ('cognitive schema') on the topic 'Shopping in the store'.

✓ Tell us about your birthday, use the following words: birthday, present, to invite, guest, to celebrate, holiday, to spend time, congratulations, wishes.

VI. Exercises for the formation of a linguistic picture of the world

✓ Read the given list of lexical items. Organize them into groups (classes). Specify the characteristics by which you distributed them so.

✓ Write to the specified word other words that would be included in this group according to a common semantic feature: Vegetables, clothes, hobby and etc.

The above exercises are aimed at understanding the mastery of a foreign word. These exercises develop:

a) lexical memory;

b) linguistic creative thinking;

- c) coding and prediction mechanisms;
- d) lexical creativity;
- e) the ability to derive new words from familiar word-formation patterns and from context;
- f) development of language conjecture;
- g) linguistic intuition.

Therefore, the cognitive principle in the framework of teaching a foreign language is an absolute necessity. Firstly, it is based on the cognitive skills already acquired by students while mastering their native language, which greatly facilitates and speeds up the process of mastering a foreign language. And this is important with a small number of hours in the curriculum allocated to the study of a foreign language. Secondly, this method involves the use of all means to intensify the educational process. Teaching optimal cognitive strategies ultimately leads to a faster achievement of independence by students, creating a situation of success in learning, and developing the student's abilities. "Cognitive" pedagogical techniques train the student in reflection, reflection on their actions. Thinking about what you are doing is the best strategy. One understanding of how and why should not prevail over understanding why. Teaching cognitive strategies is very important, but not sufficient on its own. It should be subordinated to the implementation of communicative tasks.

The cognitive principle is also attractive because, based on solid scientific grounds, it does not allow one to calm down, stop at once developed and tested doctrines. It gives an idea of the complexity of the reality that we call "the process of mastering a foreign language." It makes you constantly remember that nothing in the learning process can be foreseen with absolute accuracy. Nothing is predetermined either on the part of the teacher or on the part of the student. Awareness of this makes you be ready for the fact that at the next moment of the lesson you will have to reorganize, change tactics. However, the teacher's knowledge of the laws of the process of cognition gives a feeling of self-confidence, allows you to model the educational process adequately to the tasks set.

All of the above reflections are based on the pedagogical concept of a person as a unique being and invite not only a cognitive approach to methodology, but also a student-centered pedagogy. Teaching methods implemented in line with the cognitive method have a huge educational potential. They develop independence of thought and action, the desire to manage their own learning and evaluate it, in addition to mental development, they contribute to the spiritual and social development of the individual.

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