



THE ROLE OF THE PSYCHOLINGUISTIC APPROACH IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

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Abstract: The psycholinguistic approach plays a crucial role in the implementation of communicative competence, being a psychologically complex process. These approaches include - the mechanisms of language and brain functioning, memory, context and searching the necessary meaning, social and emotional aspects of the language and the fact that the language is an "unconscious" process. Being a gradual process, communicative competence is based on grammatical knowledge and the word stock of the language. The effectiveness of a foreign language teaching is directly related to the development of communicative skills. Therefore, the integration of modern methods, technological tools and interactive approaches into the teaching process is important and inevitable.

Psycholinguistic approaches provide a scientific basis for communicative competence. These approaches provide theoretical and practical evidence of language learners' language-related mentality, emotional state and the formation of knowledge in the brain, helping to prepare learners for the authentic communication in diverse social and cultural settings.

Key words: communicative, competence, psycholinguistic approach, skill, unconscious, innovative methods, brain functioning

Communicative competence is the effective use of language in real-life communication. The psycholinguistic approach, having emerged at the intersection of psychology and linguistics plays an important role in enhancing communicative competence by emphasizing cognitive processes, such as language acquisition, perception and production. This approach examines how the processing, encoding and decoding affect to the language learners. The main purpose of the article is to determine how the psycholinguistic approach enhances the communicative competence of the language learners.

Journals, books and empirical studies published in the last decade were included to the article.

In linguistics, the meaning of the term "communicative competence" is the ability of a person to use the language effectively and appropriately for communication purposes. This concept was first put forward by the American linguist Dell Hymes as an alternative and addition to the concept of "linguistic competence" by Noam Chomsky, while he focused on knowing the structure and rules of the language, D. Hymes emphasized practical use, that is, how the language



is used in real situations [Chomsky N. 2002, p.278].

Researchers of speech problems note that the concept of communicative competence is not completely unambiguously interpreted by different authors. A number of definitions have been given to the communicative competence. I want to highlight especially S.K.Sedov's definition. He confesses that communicative competence is understood as the ability of a person to organize his speech activity using linguistic means and methods adequate to the communication conditions [Седов К.Ф. 2004, p. 220]. We believe that S.K. Sedov's definition about the communicative competence is the ability to build effective speech activity and speech behavior in accordance with norms.

As it is known communicative competence consists of three components - linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic.

Thus, communicative competence, which is an important component of effective communication is formed during social interaction and is implemented in speech activity that is, it is a skill that is realized in the act of speech. There are several types of communicative competence:

1) Linguistic competence - is the ability to have knowledge about the rules of operation of language units in speech and to use this system in order to understand the thoughts of other people and express one's own opinions orally and in written form.

2) Socio-cultural competence – which involves the use of the national-cultural characteristics of the language in the process of communication.

3) Strategic competence - the ability to fill in the gaps in linguistic knowledge. This includes guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words based on: 1. the context, topic, situation; 2. choosing the correct meaning of the searched word when referring to the dictionary; 3. guessing the meaning of the word depending on the context, etc.

4) Discourse competence - the ability to use specific strategies in the interpretation of the composed text. For example, the most commonly used types of discourse in the educational and professional spheres include reports, messages, discussions, surveys, etc.

“Competence” is considered one of the most controversial terms in general and applied linguistics. This term is associated with the name of N. Chomsky. Shortly after N. Chomsky’s proposal about the concepts of competence and performance, the supporters of the communicative view in applied linguistics began to sharply object to the idea of using the idealized, purely linguistic concept of competence as a theoretical basis for learning and teaching language. They found an alternative to N. Chomsky’s concept of competence in D.Hymes’ communicative competence.

Namely, D.Hymes defined communicative competence not only as a specific grammatical competence, but also as the ability to use grammatical competence in various communicative situations [Hymes D.1972]. In the 1970s-1980s, many applied linguists interested in the theory of language acquisition made



their valuable contributions to the further development of the concept of communicative competence [Canale M. 1980, p. 127].

N. Chomsky understood the linguistic competence as “a system of intellectual abilities, knowledge and beliefs that are formed in early childhood and, in interaction with many other factors” [Richards J.S., Richards S. 2002, p.79]. He defined the concepts of competence (innate speech ability - competence) and speech production (actual speech production - performance). According to N. Chomsky, a competent speaker/listener should be able to construct/understand an unlimited number of sentences from models and make judgments about idioms. Speech production is a semantic system formed in the native language on the basis of innate cognitive structures.

Thus, the concept of linguistic competence depends on the teaching learners how to construct correct sentences in a language. However, the concept of “communicative competence” focuses on increasing the ability of an individual to communicate with each other and to interact effectively in a given situation. Consequently, linguistic competence tells us which sentences in a language are grammatically correct, while communicative competence tells us which expressions in a language are communicatively appropriate.

“Grammatical competence is that part of communicative competence that deals with the rules of language. It is the knowledge of the rules of language, vocabulary, spelling and pronunciation and is closely related to the more detailed and specific conventions of a language. For example, it is the ability to determine what meaning a speaker’s words carry and how to use them in expressions and sentences” [Canale M. 1980]. The unity of these existing competencies allows for the effective, appropriate and purposeful use of the language.

In the modern globalized world, foreign language skills play an essential role in everyone's personal and professional development. Communicative skills, being a key component of language acquisition, ensure the practical application of acquired knowledge and play a special role in the formation and development of intercultural understanding. The development of communicative competence in foreign language lessons is considered to be one of the main priorities of the modern education system.

In the development of communicative skills, along with grammatical knowledge, effective communication, listening, writing and reading skills should be developed in a balanced manner. In the modern era, it is impossible to learn a language at a high level without the role of technologies. Thus, online platforms, mobile applications and artificial intelligence-based tools and language environments make this process even easier.

The main goal of foreign language learners is to acquire effective communicative skills. Language knowledge has nothing to do with linguistic knowledge. Speaking, reading, listening and writing are considered essential parts of language learning. Real communication is realized only as a result of the mutual use of language.



Today the training of highly skilled, competitive personnel is of particular importance in the field of education. Language skills are the basis of effective communication and cooperation in the business world. These skills strengthen the professional activity of personnel, facilitate their integration into the labor market and ensure their competitiveness.

Psycholinguistics, which emerged at the junction of linguistics and psychology, investigates the process of learning and using language by linking it to brain and psychological factors. Psycholinguistics tries to clarify the way how the language is acquired by the human brain and the mutual relationships between various functions and processes in the brain in relation to the structure and the use of the language.

Learning a foreign language is a psychologically complex process. The psycholinguistic approach plays a major role in the application of communicative competence and as an example, we can cite 1) the mechanisms of language and brain functioning. Psycholinguists link language learning and use to structural functions in the brain, as the relevant areas of the brain (Broca's and Wernicke's) are activated during language acquisition and use. The development of communicative competence shows how these areas work and how disorders in these areas affect language skills. Thus, the psycholinguistic approach that affects language learning is not just the acquisition of information, but also various processes taking place in the brain.

2) The role of memory in the language learning process. The psycholinguistic approach shows that memory has an important role in the language learning process. The transfer of knowledge from short-term memory to long-term memory has a significant impact on the development of language skills. For example, memorizing the structure of the language and the vocabulary of the language requires repetition and consolidation (reinforcement), due to the psycholinguistic studies.

3) Context and search for meaning. The psycholinguistic approach emphasizes not only the importance of the use of a language according to grammatical rules, but also to select the right meaning in the communication process. The main factors influencing the development of communicative skills are the proper functioning of brain functions in the search for meaning and the application of language forms appropriate to any communicative situation.

4) Taking into account the social and emotional aspects of a language. Understanding the social functions of a language is important for the development of communicative skills.

5) Language is an "unconscious" process. The psycholinguistic approach to the language suggests that language use occurs at a subconscious level. Communicating with language, people often apply grammatical rules not consciously, but automatically based on previous experiences and this "unconscious" process is repeated during the development of language skills and is improved through practice.



First of all, we would like to focus on practical language learning methods. These learning methods involve repetition and active practice, the transfer of learned knowledge by the brain to a long-term memory.

According to L.S.Vygotsky, mastering a foreign language differs from mastering a native language. The native language is acquired unconsciously, while the foreign language, on the contrary, is acquired consciously and deliberately. The expression of ideas and the understanding of the semantic essence are important factors in the study of a foreign language [Выготский Л.С. 1934, p.30].

According to A.A. Leontiev, the psycholinguistic essence of teaching foreign languages is manifested at the didactic-methodical, collective-psychological or socio-psychological level [Leontev A. A. 2001, p.294]. In fact, the psychological content is manifested in the personal activity of the individual. Here, the motivation for language acquisition, methods of perception, organization of the learning process at the socio-psychological level, and the acquisition of the required knowledge are the main conditions.

Communicative competence is a gradual process and is based on grammatical knowledge and a vocabulary. As has been proven, the left hemisphere of the brain controls the linguistic content, and the right hemisphere controls the emotional state, thereby implementing pragmatic normalization of speech [Бочарникова М. А. 2009, p.131].

The theories of N. Chomsky and Skinner play an important role in language acquisition. Chomsky's theory is based on theoretical and applied issues, while Skinner's theory is based on experiments. In addition to these theories, J. Piaget's cognitive theory has also a great importance in language acquisition. Psycholinguistics, which studies mental processes, plays a significant role in language production and understanding. It is precisely a teacher who has psycholinguistic knowledge who can implement effective teaching.

Now let's look at the specific examples to illustrate the role of psycholinguistic approaches in the development of communicative competence. First of all, the language environment is the basis for language teaching.

Thus, the use of the visual materials, gestures and facial expressions by the teacher during the lesson is the transmission of understandable input to the brain, which facilitates perception. Another issue is the correction of errors made in the communication process, which is carried out through visual schemes and structural exercises. The psycholinguistic approach involves the student's transition from passive knowledge to active use. This process is activated through conversational exercises and dialogues. Psycholinguistic analyses show that the emotional state existing in the lesson process directly affects speech activity. That is why the creation of a free communication environment reduces stress. The examples we have shown prove that psycholinguistic approaches are not just theoretical knowledge, but can be used as a very powerful tool in the practical lesson process and personal development.

In everyday life, we encounter people with different thinking. Our ability to



exchange ideas with others, solve problems and successfully use the presented steps and processes that depends significantly on how effectively we communicate with others.

In linguistics, the term competence is given as both competence and skill, but although these concepts are close to each other, they are different in terms of content and application. Competence is a broad and multifaceted concept and is a set of knowledge, skills, behaviors, values and abilities that a person needs to work successfully in a certain field of activity. The proficiency or the qualification is the ability to perform a certain task qualitatively and correctly. Competence is more related to experience and practical application of knowledge. Skill is the ability to perform a specific task. Ability can be physical or mental and is usually acquired as a result of experience and training, while skill is a component of a competence. For example, a teacher's competence includes his or her acquisition of pedagogical knowledge, the ability to establish proper relationships with others, the use of methods to make the lesson interesting and the ability to apply them correctly. In this case, the teacher's competence shows how he or she uses this knowledge and skills in the teaching process.

Developing communication skills helps us to be more successful in both our personal lives and activities. There are several effective approaches to developing these skills. Examples of these approaches include psycholinguistic approaches that cover both language skills and general communication skills.

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