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INTEGRATION OF COMMUNICATIVE AND COGNITIVE METHODS IN TEACHING RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

The article explores the integration of communicative and cognitive methods in teaching Russian as a foreign language. The study examines the theoretical foundations of both approaches and analyzes their practical implementation in language instruction. Particular attention is paid to the development of communicative competence, conscious grammar acquisition, and the formation of cognitive strategies that facilitate language learning. The article argues that combining communicative and cognitive approaches allows educators to overcome the limitations of each method and achieve more effective language acquisition. The importance of cultural competence and reflective practice in the learning process is also discussed.

Keywords: Russian as a foreign language, communicative method, cognitive method, communicative competence, language acquisition, cultural competence, reflective learning.

Introduction. The modern methodology of teaching Russian as a foreign language is characterized by the search for effective pedagogical solutions that ensure both linguistic accuracy and communicative fluency. Among the most influential approaches are the communicative and cognitive methods, each of which reflects a distinct understanding of the language learning process. Contemporary researchers increasingly emphasize the need to integrate these approaches in order to achieve balanced and sustainable learning outcomes [2; 4].

The communicative method emerged as a response to the limitations of traditional grammar-centered instruction. Its primary objective is the development of communicative competence, understood as the ability to use language appropriately and effectively in real-life situations. Within the framework of Russian language teaching, communicative methodology prioritizes speech practice over the memorization of grammatical rules. Learners acquire linguistic structures through meaningful interaction, role-playing activities, discussions, and problem-solving tasks. Authentic materials such as newspaper articles, podcasts, interviews, and multimedia resources play an important role in creating realistic communication environments [4].

One of the fundamental principles of the communicative method is situational learning. Language forms are introduced and practiced within specific communicative contexts rather than as isolated

grammatical phenomena. For example, the acquisition of Russian case forms may occur through shopping dialogues, travel simulations, or professional communication scenarios. Such activities help students understand the functional value of linguistic structures and facilitate their practical application in communication [5].

At the same time, the cognitive method focuses on conscious learning and the development of mental processes involved in language acquisition. Rooted in cognitive psychology, this approach views language learning as the construction of knowledge structures and the formation of strategies for processing linguistic information. The complexity of Russian grammar, including its case system, verbal aspect, and rich morphology, makes cognitive techniques particularly valuable in Russian language instruction [4].

The cognitive approach encourages learners to identify grammatical patterns independently, compare linguistic phenomena, classify language units, and establish logical relationships among them. Visualization techniques, conceptual maps, and schematic representations of grammatical systems help learners organize knowledge and improve retention. Another important aspect of the cognitive method is consideration of individual learning styles, which allows instructors to adapt educational materials to the needs of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners [2].

Despite their advantages, both approaches have limitations when applied separately. The communicative method may sometimes lead to insufficient grammatical accuracy because learners focus primarily on meaning rather than form. Conversely, the cognitive method may create situations in which students possess theoretical knowledge of language structures but encounter difficulties using them spontaneously in communication. This phenomenon is often described as the discrepancy between knowing a language and being able to speak it effectively [4].

The integration of communicative and cognitive methods provides a solution to these challenges. Cognitive strategies can facilitate the understanding of complex grammatical concepts, while communicative activities ensure the practical application and automation of acquired knowledge. For instance, students may first analyze the rules governing verbal aspect through guided discovery tasks and then practice these forms in role plays, debates, and collaborative projects. Such an approach promotes both accuracy and fluency, creating a more balanced learning experience [2; 5].

An additional component of integrated language instruction is the development of cultural competence. Language cannot be separated from culture, and successful communication requires knowledge of social norms, values, traditions, and behavioral patterns. Cultural awareness helps learners interpret linguistic meanings more accurately and avoid misunderstandings in intercultural communication. Therefore, authentic cultural materials and discussions of sociocultural issues should be incorporated into the educational process [1; 3].

Reflective practice also contributes significantly to successful language learning. Reflection encourages students to evaluate their progress, identify learning difficulties, and develop strategies for overcoming them. Language portfolios, self-assessment activities, and reflective journals support learner autonomy and promote a deeper understanding of the language acquisition process. Research findings indicate that students who engage in regular reflection demonstrate higher levels of motivation and more effective learning outcomes [2].

In conclusion, the integration of communicative and cognitive methods represents one of the most promising directions in contemporary Russian language pedagogy. The combination of conscious language analysis and meaningful communicative practice allows learners to acquire linguistic knowledge more effectively and apply it successfully in real-life situations. Furthermore, the inclusion of cultural competence and reflective learning strengthens the overall effectiveness of language education and contributes to the development of competent and autonomous language users [1; 2; 4; 5].

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