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COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH IN TEACHING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
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Abstract: In this article it is spoken about a communicative approach that is aimed at the formation of students’ semantic perception and understanding of a foreign language, as well as the mastery of linguistic material for the construction of speech utterances.

Key words: competence, method, motivation, communicative approach.

Another important factor that influenced the popularity of the communicative approach was the influx of refugees into developed countries, which required a completely new teaching method that would allow not only to quickly integrate foreigners into the environment, but could also be taught in a classroom where students spoke different languages and did not even understand each other.

“A communicative approach in teaching a foreign language” is a topic that I have been working on for several years. I chose this topic not by accident, because “the main goal of teaching a foreign language is to develop students' communicative competence, develop skills and abilities to use the language”, develop abilities and willingness to communicate at the level of dialogue—cultures, i.e. prepare students for potential communication with a native speaker.

The development of communicative competence depends on sociocultural and sociolinguistic knowledge, skills that ensure the personality enters into another society. For this, it is necessary to create conditions for communication, a favorable psychological
climate, and provide students with motivation by revealing to them the practical orientation of the course.

What is the general “communicative approach” in teaching a foreign language and when did it arise? The communicative approach to teaching first appeared in the 70s of the last century as a result of the work of experts from the Council of Europe and has become one of the main methods in teaching foreign languages.[1.p.161]

The main goal of the communicative approach is the communicative competence of students.

The foremost purpose of the CLT is to develop students’ communicative competence with the help of building the educational process around interaction in the foreign language, so that in perspective they could converse well and appropriately [2, p. 42].

Communicative competence includes the following aspects:
— knowledge of how to use the language for different purposes and functions;
— knowledge of how the language changes in a particular communicative situation;
— the ability to compose, read and understand texts, to characterize them;
— ability to maintain a conversation.

How is learning a foreign language?

Communicative competence comprises:[3.p.2-3]

Grammatical competence (the main goal is not to demonstrate the knowledge of grammar rules but a grammatical competence – using a rule in the negotiation of meaning, expression or interpretation);

Discourse competence (understanding the nature of correlation between certain words or phrases in a text, and the ability to interpret the overall meaning of the text properly);

Sociolinguistic competence (comprehension of the social context in which language is used);

Strategic competence.

One of the main differences of the method is the use of induction rather than deduction. That is, there is no need to give lectures and formulate the rules by the teacher: they are comprehended by the student even without their verbal formulation. Previously, teaching foreign languages was mainly aimed at developing grammatical competence. It was believed that grammatical exercises that do not take into account the context, help to develop the habit of proper use of the language. Through memorization of dialogues and phrases, correction of errors orally or in writing, constant monitoring by teachers in old methods, they unsuccessfully tried to avoid incorrect speech.

However, the communicative approach, first of all, focuses not on the correctness of language structures (although this aspect also remains important), but on other parameters:

the interaction of participants in the process of communication, that is, awareness of possible options for the development of dialogues;
understanding and achieving a common communicative goal;
trying to explain and express things in different ways, that is, the development of the rephrasing skill;
expanding the competence of one participant in communication by communicating with other participants.

Brown defines communicative competence as the one that allows us to exchange meanings between persons in particular circumstances.[4.p. 246]. Harmer explains the learning principles in accordance with the communicative approach and puts the emphasis on communicative activities in which language is utilized as a tool to accomplish an interactive assignment.[5.p.37].

Thus, this new language teaching method became known as the CLT, and has dominated the EFL/ESL profession since then.[6.p.88]

The aims of Communicative Language Teaching are to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and to develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication. That is to say, students need to practice what they have acquired in order to express their ideas, and teachers should provide situations for students to practice and discuss in order to make them understand that learning a language is to use the language.[7.p.13]

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How does learning a foreign language happen? The role of a teacher in learning

When using the communicative approach, the teacher does not give lectures and does not formulate rules using grammatical terms, but, as a rule, acts as:
assistant;
friend;
adviser.

The focus is on group learning. The task of the teacher and students is to learn to work together, to move away from individualized learning. A student learns to listen to his comrades, conduct conversations and discussions in the group, work on projects together with other members of the group. A student focuses more on his teammates than on his teacher as a model. An effective method is also to engage the student in a professional language environment while studying in a communicative language group. Exercises and tasks that are used in teaching foreign languages by the communicative method:
Projects;
communication games;
communication exercises;
theatricalization;
discussions

Communicative exercises are a simple and effective way to teach a person to make contact and communicate confidently.

Communicative exercises are used both in communication training, and in training to increase sales, negotiations, training on rhetoric and oratory. The popularity of these exercises is not accidental. After all, they develop the most important skill for success in any field—the ability to communicate.

Communicative exercises can have various accents and tasks. Some exercises teach you to speak beautifully, while others demonstrate the importance of listening and asking questions. Moreover, communicative exercises help to remove barriers in communication, to teach training participants to communicate more easily and naturally.

A game is one of the most interesting types of educational activities. Game methods and techniques allow you to master and consolidate new knowledge not with the traditional method of memorization and repeated repetition, but with the help of active, causing increased interest and additional motivation for actions. The use of gaming technologies in the pedagogical practice of teaching Russian as a foreign language and teaching as a whole has more than once become the subject of understanding for teachers of higher and secondary schools. The game is considered as the basis of the modern lesson, the features of the use and inclusion of the game in the development of new material, the process of preparing the game, some articles on a given topic are based on the development of specific games.

By the quantitative composition of the game participants are divided into individual, doubles, groups, teams and collective. Language games, helping to learn various aspects of the language (phonetics, vocabulary, etc.) are divided into phonetic, lexical, grammatical and stylistic. We will consider in more detail communicative (speech) games, since this particular kind of educational games seems to be interested in the framework of this article. Learning to speak includes developing the skills of dialogic and monologic speech. Communicative techniques are used in communicative games, in which students solve communicative and cognitive tasks using the studied foreign language.

Therefore, the main goal of communicative games is the organization of foreign language communication in the course of solving the stated communicative task or problem. Communicative games have a high degree of visibility and allow you to activate the studied language material in speech situations that simulate and imitate the real process of communication. A communicative game is an educational task that includes linguistic, communicative and activity tasks. Solving a language problem involves the formation or improvement of speech skills in the process of purposeful use of a given language material in speech activity. The communicative task is to exchange information between the participants in the game in the process of joint activities.

In my teaching practice, I most often use board and card educational games: “Bingo”, “Confusion” and “Labyrinths” to conduct ongoing monitoring of knowledge of
lexical material and to identify difficulties for students on the topics “Numeral”, “Personal pronouns”; “Proposal constructors”, “Domino”. So, for example, when I study the topic “Foreigners” in my first year, I invite students to play Domino during the introduction of vocabulary on the topic of “Nation” and the repetition of vocabulary on the theme of “Character Traits”.

So, communicative games are necessary exercises for teaching a foreign language, since they bring the process of activating lexical and grammatical material closer to the conditions of real communication. In addition, these exercises increase the motivation and activity of students in the lessons. This means that students will be able to master a new means of communication, that is, acquire communication skills using the language they are learning.

Special manuals have been developed for the communicative teaching methodology. These are mainly Oxford and Cambridge approaches to learning a foreign language. The basic principle of such textbooks is the application of various practical skills in learning a foreign language, in particular, composing dialogues, discussion games, reading and analyzing texts from unadapted real sources.

The objective of this article is to depict how effectively the communicative approach is being applied in all grade classrooms and to find out the beliefs of the teachers and students on the use of this approach in terms of classroom practices.

The communicative approach aims to give learners more control and autonomy of their own learning via student-centered group work activities and the chance to control the content of the classroom instruction. However, in the observed classes, the content of the instruction is mainly determined by the teacher and occasionally by the teacher and the learners together, but never merely by the learners. Therefore, the teacher is regarded as the expert in the classroom by both the students and the teachers themselves. This is also consistent with the participants’ opinions about error correction, teacher and learner roles.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that all exercises and games create favorable conditions for imitating a foreign language environment, contribute to the intensive use of vocabulary, develop a sense of language, and the ability to work with text. In this case, the teacher provides children with maximum independence in creativity, does not give direct instructions, helps to act independently, and as a result of careful observation and evaluation, determines their strengths and weaknesses. Students must act independently in the lesson during the games, always show their initiative, whatever it may be.

References: