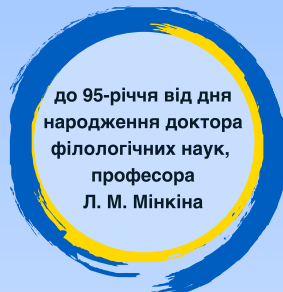


МІНІСТЕРСТВО ОСВІТИ І НАУКИ УКРАЇНИ
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Мислення – мова – мовлення

Від Г. Гійома до Л. М. Мінкіна:
століття авангардистських ідей



Матеріали

міжнародної конференції
з актуальних проблем
лінгвістики та дидактики



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INTEGRATING COMMUNICATION INTO GRAMMAR TEACHING

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Enhancing the communicative orientation of the educational process, i.e. aiming at natural communication, led to the introduction of the Communicative Approach, known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), in the 1970s. Since its implementation, the communicative approach has become an integrative part of teaching languages. Unlike the traditional methods that emphasise drilling, repetition, grammar rules and translation, it considers language to be the means of communication and focuses on using it in context. The approach is characterised by moving from a teacher-centred to a student-centred classroom with the teacher in the role of a facilitator, an organiser, a guide, a group process manager, a needs analyst, a language expert focusing on the needs and interests of the students, by plenty of pair and group work that encourages active participation and cooperation between the students, by tolerant attitude to errors and the teacher's ability to adequately correct them without discouraging the students' desire to speak and their further communication, by integrating all four language skills: reading, listening, speaking and writing, by using text-based or task-based materials, either created or authentic, reflecting real world and related to alive communication. Thus, the student's communicative competence is formed through the communicative approach in the learning process. According to Jack Richards, the latter is understood as the ability to use the language for meaningful communication and includes the following aspects of language knowledge: 1) knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions; 2) knowing how to vary the use of language according to the settings and the participants (e.g., formal – informal speech, or written – spoken communication); 3) knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g., narratives, reports, interviews, conversations); 4) knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in the language knowledge (e.g., through different communication strategies) (Richards, 2006, p. 3).

Grammatical competence, a constituent part of communicative competence, is the ability to correctly formulate one's utterance and understand the grammatical side of other people's speech. Grammatical competence is based on the interaction of grammatical knowledge, grammatical subskills and grammatical awareness (Ніколаєва, 2013, сс. 239-240). Earlier, the idea of successful language learning was associated with mastering grammatical competence, but the attitude toward it has been changing for decades.

There are several approaches to learning English grammar in methodology, including the traditional, functional, and communicative approaches. The traditional approaches (deductive and inductive) give "priority to grammatical competence as the basis of language proficiency" (Richards, 2006, p. 7) and involve learning grammar through practising correct structures, repetition, and drilling. The techniques used include memorization of dialogues, question-and-answer practice, substitution drills, various forms of guided speaking and writing practice, and accurate mastery of grammar and pronunciation. The approach that introduced the Grammar Translation method, the Direct method, and, later, the Audio-Lingual and Audio-Visual methods is often criticized for teaching grammar in isolation from context and real communication (Richards, 2006, p. 7). The functional approach to learning grammar involves using it for different communicative purposes, such as expressing likes and dislikes, making requests and suggestions, giving advice and explanations, describing wishes and needs, offering and accepting apologies, and introducing someone. Communicative competence is viewed as mastery of functions needed for communication across a wide range of situations (Richards, 2006, pp. 10-12). The communicative approach to grammar learning supports the idea that language should be learned through life-related communication within the context of communicative language activities, such as conversations, discussions, role-plays, presentations, simulations, writings and other interactive tasks (Ostafiychuk, 2023, pp. 97-101).

To create a communicative environment to help students develop their communicative skills, the teacher should consider the following points: 1) the use of a meaningful context, both authentic and engaging, to motivate students to learn; 2) the

use of grammar as a tool for effective communication in real-life situations; 3) a student-centred classroom where they can be given opportunities to express opinions, share their experiences and participate in collaborative activities; 4) the use of authentic materials, such as printed or online newspaper articles, advertisements, educational videos, podcasts, TV series, popular TV shows, cartoons, songs, poems relevant to the reality and current activities; 5) task-based learning with the activities designed to help students solve real-life problems; 6) a role-play aimed at acting out everyday situations using the target language.

Among the communicative tasks and activities used for teaching grammar, the following ideas can be suggested:

1. *Information Gap*: students have to ask each other questions in order to fill in the missing information in the text using the target grammar. The focus can be on the types and the structure of interrogative sentences, the use of tenses, etc.

2. *Role Plays and Simulations*: students act out scenarios using specific grammatical structures (e.g. making requests, giving advice, asking for/giving or refusing permission, making suggestions, giving orders using modal words, modal verbs and/or modal expressions).

3. *Storytelling*: students create a story collaboratively, focusing on sentence structure, tenses, text organisation or linking words.

4. *Surveys*: students design and conduct surveys using specific question forms, then report back on findings; the grammar focus may be on tenses and comparatives.

5. *Debates and discussions*: to state their opinions and provide arguments and counter-arguments, the students use functional language for expressing agreement and disagreement, giving opinions, making suggestions, and deducing or inferring something the modals of deduction can serve right.

An absolute advantage of learning languages using the communicative approach is overcoming the fear of live communication. Moreover, the communicative approach, which proves to be rather effective at any language learning level, helps form communicative competence, develops and improves communication skills, critical thinking and creativity, boosts motivation and enhances socializing in a foreign

language environment. On the other hand, there can be disadvantages as well, such as insufficient attention paid to error correction, spelling, vocabulary, grammar rules and key grammar structures. Another concern is that the communicative approach may not be suitable for highly analytical students, who may benefit more from explicit, rule-based learning, and for introverts, who mostly avoid communication.

Despite these concerns, many teachers and authors admit that the communicative approach can help students develop their ability to use language in context and communicate effectively, which are the main goals of language learning. What is more, the choice of the best approach to teaching grammar may not only depend on the goals of the language program or course but rather on the needs and learning styles of individual students. The teacher should create a friendly atmosphere in the classroom, a communicative environment that encourages students to participate, speak their minds, and use grammar in a meaningful context, thus helping them develop their communication skills and promoting their overall language proficiency.

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