

THEORY AND METHODS OF TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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Abstract: This article examines the evolution of foreign language teaching methodologies, focusing on behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism and their influence on instructional approaches. It highlights the shift from traditional grammar-based methods to interactive, technology-enhanced learning. Emphasizing the role of meaningful communication, learner autonomy, and cultural awareness, the study underscores the need for adaptive, research-informed strategies to meet the demands of globalization and diverse learner needs.

Key words: method, skills, behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism, theoretical frameworks, cognitive code approach, grammar translation method, Task-Based Language Teaching

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqola bixeviorizm, kognitivizm va konstruktivizmga e'tibor qaratib, chet tillarini o'qitish metodologiyasining evolyutsiyasini va ularning ta'lim yondashuvlariga ta'sirini o'rganadi. U an'anaviy grammatikaga asoslangan usullardan interaktiv, texnologiya takomillashtirilgan ta'limga o'tishni ta'kidlaydi. Ma'noli muloqot, o'quvchilarning avtonomiyasi va madaniy xabardorlik rolini ta'kidlagan holda, tadqiqot globallashuv talablari va o'quvchilarning turli ehtiyojlarini qondirish uchun moslashuvchan, tadqiqotdan xabardor strategiyalar zarurligini ta'kidlaydi.

Kalit so'zlar: usul, ko'nikmalar, bixeviorizm, kognitivizm, konstruktivizm, nazariy asoslar, kognitiv kod yondashuvi, grammatik tarjima usuli, vazifaga asoslangan til o'rgatish.

Аннотация: В этой статье рассматривается эволюция методик преподавания иностранных языков, с упором на бихевиоризм, когнитивизм и конструктивизм и их влияние на подходы к обучению. В ней подчеркивается переход от традиционных методов, основанных на грамматике, к интерактивному обучению с использованием технологий. Подчеркивая роль осмысленной коммуникации, автономии учащихся и культурной осведомленности, исследование подчеркивает необходимость адаптивных, основанных на исследованиях стратегий для удовлетворения требований глобализации и разнообразных потребностей учащихся.

Ключевые слова: метод, навыки, бихевиоризм, когнитивизм, конструктивизм, теоретические основы, подход когнитивного кода, метод перевода грамматики, обучение языку на основе задач

Language as a means of communication, sends a message to the world about social cohesion, cultural shape, and national development of a certain country. Learning foreign

languages has become one of today's most important requirements. For generations, linguists and educators have been interested in teaching other languages. Effective language education strategies have become increasingly important. As a result of globalization and the growing need for multilingual communication. Knowing a foreign language enhances intellectual ability by being a key to a wide range of knowledge bases and allows people to advance their socioeconomic well-being. The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev issued a decree "On measures to raise the popularization of learning foreign languages to a qualitatively new level" in May, 2021 [1]. According to this document, the quality of education and the qualification of foreign languages teachers have enhanced foreign language teaching in schools and higher educational institutions. This process fundamentally requires both a comprehensive mastery of the target language and highly developed communication skills. Language educators play a pivotal role in facilitating language acquisition and guiding learners toward fluency, accuracy, and communicative competence. Effective language instruction not only involves imparting linguistic knowledge but also fostering an environment that supports meaningful interaction, cultural awareness, and cognitive engagement. Effective teaching a foreign language is not only measured by cause to acquire knowledge of another tongue, or skills like reading, speaking, writing, and listening, but also being aware of intercultural communication, understanding and respecting the traditions and life of other nations, and being tolerant towards modus vivendi of their societies.

Throughout the history of foreign language education, various **theoretical frameworks** have emerged, each providing distinct perspectives on how individuals acquire and use a new language. These frameworks serve as the foundation for numerous teaching methodologies and instructional strategies, shaping both traditional and modern approaches to language learning. Among the most influential theoretical paradigms are **behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism**, each of which offers a unique lens through which language acquisition can be understood and facilitated.

Behaviorism, rooted in the principles of stimulus-response learning, emphasizes repetition, reinforcement, and habit formation as key mechanisms for acquiring a new language. According to B.F. Skinner (1957) "Verbal behavior arises in and is shaped by, a verbal environment - an environment in which responses are characteristically reinforced in certain ways. A verbal environment is perhaps as close as we shall come to the traditional notion of "a language". How an environment arises is a problem in its own right. How it began is the old question of the origin of language. We are required only to show that a verbal environment could have arisen from non-verbal circumstances. We are in a better position to say how it grows and changes, for this can sometimes be observed. A verbal environment is the product of a long interchange between speakers and listeners, each changing the behavior of the other to some degree [2]. This theory has contributed to methods such as the Audio-Lingual Method, which emphasizes structured repetition and pattern practice to enhance proper language use. Lado R., (1964) an American linguist thoroughly discussed patterns and practices in teaching foreign languages. "The fact that language operates largely based on habit should be obvious to everyone. It is only through habit that the thousand-and-one rules of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary are used by every fluent speaker of the language at normal speed. We do most of the choosing of words habit" [3]. He suggests patterns and practices, such as simple oral substitution, where the main stress is on listening and uttering patterns in the speech. For instance, the words "do/does/did/have/had/has" when used in questions and negative sentences do not exist in the Uzbek language, which naturally makes it hard to remember for language

learners. By constantly practicing students develop a habit of adding the words “do/does/did/have/had/has” to a sentence and after a certain amount of time use these auxiliary verbs by default. Another practice is simple substitution: pictures. The students can be provided with cue cards with pictures of various objects, such as a train, a ship, a car, a hat, etc. They need to repeat the names of items or phrases and sentences connected to these pictures. After constant repetitions and understanding the core meaning of the sentences, they remember new words and phrases easily. These methods can be practiced both separately and as a form of multiple substitution. It is worth mentioning that this approach has been popular to some degree among foreign language educators in the 2010s in Uzbekistan. Even though the grammar knowledge and vocabulary bank of the students were satisfactory, they were still struggling with speaking and listening skills.

In contrast, **cognitivism** views language learning as an active mental process in which learners internalize rules, analyze structures, and develop problem-solving skills. Noam Chomsky, (1959) criticized the theory of **behaviorism** and introduced the concept of an innate Universal Grammar, that suggests humans are born with an innate ability to acquire language, and instruction should focus on understanding language rules rather than mere repetition [4]. Noam Chomsky claims: “The fact that all normal children acquire essentially comparable grammars of great complexity with remarkable rapidity suggests that human beings are somehow specially designed to do this, with data-handling or “hypothesis-formulating” ability of unknown character and complexity. The study of linguistic structure may ultimately lead to some significant insights into this matter” [5]. Approaches influenced by this framework, such as **the Cognitive Code Approach**, focus on understanding grammatical rules and fostering deeper cognitive engagement with the language. The Cognitive Code Approach includes the following features:

- 1) **Focus on Understanding** – Language learners are encouraged to learn and understand grammatical structures and rules before using them in real-life communication.
- 2) **Conscious Learning** – Unlike behaviorist methods that emphasize mainly memorization, this approach encourages an active cognitive process in language acquisition.
- 3) **Grammar-Based Learning** – It emphasizes that strong knowledge of rules enhances the ability to develop correct language skills.
- 4) **Deductive and Inductive Learning** – Students may either be given grammar rules explicitly (deductive) or discover them through guided exercises (inductive).
- 5) **Use of Native Language** – It allows limited use of the native language for explanations and comparisons.
- 6) **Meaning over Memorization** – While repetition is used, the goal is to develop a deep understanding of the language structure.

Meanwhile, constructivism posits that learners actively construct knowledge through interaction, collaboration, and contextualized experiences. This perspective has led to the development of communicative and task-based approaches, such as **Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)** and **Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)**, which prioritize meaningful communication, real-world tasks, and learner autonomy.

While constructivism proposes that learners actively acquire knowledge via interaction, collaboration, and contextualized experiences (Piaget, 1950; Vygotsky, 1978). This perspective has significant effect on second language acquisition (SLA) and pedagogy, leading to the development of communicative and task-based methods. Particularly, **Communicative**

Language Teaching (CLT) and **Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)** prioritize meaningful communication, real-world tasks, and learner autonomy [8].

The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method highlights authentic communication and fluency over strict grammar rules. Students engage in activities such as role-plays, interviews, information gap exercises, and problem-solving tasks, which require them to use language meaningfully rather than relying on rote memorization in CLT classrooms. Namely, CLT promotes interaction during activities, such as pair and group discussions, allowing learners to develop communicative skills.

On the other hand, **Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)**, is structured around real-world tasks that encourage language use in practical contexts. Learners might engage in activities such as planning a trip, conducting surveys, or negotiating contracts, all of which require them to communicate effectively to complete the task. According to Nunan, TBLT provides a framework where learners develop linguistic competence by focusing on meaning rather than form-first instruction.

Several methods and approaches, have been developed over time to facilitate language learning. The effectiveness of each method depends on learner needs, educational settings, and technological advancements.

Conclusion

The implications of this study suggest that foreign language teaching has evolved significantly, incorporating various theories and methodologies to enhance language acquisition. While traditional methods provide a foundation, modern approaches emphasize interaction, immersion, and technological integration. Understanding these frameworks is essential for educators seeking to create effective, research-informed learning environments that cater to diverse learner needs and preferences. Consequently, the interplay between these theories and the methodologies derived from them remains a central focus in the field of foreign language teaching, ensuring that instructional practices evolve in response to emerging insights from linguistic, psychological, and educational research. By understanding and applying the appropriate methods, educators can facilitate effective and engaging language learning experiences, preparing learners for the demands of a multilingual world.

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