



THE ROLE OF COGNITIVE APPROACH IN TEACHING PHRASEOLOGICAL
UNITS

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Abstract: *This article examines the importance and effectiveness of the cognitive approach in the process of teaching phraseological units. The national-cultural characteristics of phraseologisms, their place in the structure of consciousness, and their acquisition through cognitive mechanisms were analyzed. The article reveals the differences between traditional and cognitive methods in teaching phraseological units and recommends new approaches based on the principles of cognitive linguistics. The research thoroughly covers the conceptual foundations of phraseological units, metaphor and metonymy mechanisms, as well as the cognitive processes of language learners. The results demonstrate that the cognitive approach facilitates deep and long-term mastery of phraseological units.*

Keywords: *phraseological units, cognitive approach, conceptual metaphor, language learning, linguistic culture, cognitive mechanisms, semantic analysis.*

INTRODUCTION

In modern linguistics, the issues of studying and teaching phraseological units hold particular significance. Phraseologisms constitute a rich layer of language, reflecting a nation's culture, history, and worldview. Their proper understanding and application require not only a high level of language proficiency but also intercultural communication competence.

In recent years, the cognitive approach has been widely applied in language learning and teaching. This approach is based on the principles of viewing language as a product of human consciousness and linking linguistic phenomena with cognitive processes. From the perspective of cognitive linguistics, phraseological units are considered not merely combinations of words but expressions of certain conceptual structures.

Traditional methods often treat phraseological units as ready-made phrases to be memorized, with their grammatical structure analyzed. However, this approach has limited capabilities in revealing the deep meanings and cultural-cognitive foundations of phraseologisms. The cognitive approach, on the other hand, enables the study of the mechanisms of phraseological unit formation, their conceptual foundations, and their connection with human ways of perceiving the world.

Currently, numerous linguists and methodologists emphasize the necessity of using cognitive methods in teaching phraseological units. This approach helps students understand the internal logic and cultural context of phraseologisms rather than mechanically memorizing them, thereby ensuring more effective acquisition of language units.

MAIN PART



The cognitive approach emerged in the second half of the 20th century as a result of the development of cognitive psychology and cognitive linguistics. This approach studies the relationships between human cognitive processes, memory, attention, thinking, and language. One of the founders of cognitive linguistics developed the theory of conceptual metaphor and proved that many aspects of language, including phraseological units, are based on metaphorical thinking.

Within the cognitive approach framework, language is viewed not only as a means of communication but also as a way of categorizing and understanding the world. Cognitive grammar theory emphasizes that all language structures are meaningful and closely connected with the human conceptual system.

When phraseological units are studied from a cognitive perspective, their formation and use are found to be directly related to human experience, cultural knowledge, and cognitive mechanisms. The concept of "embodied experience" demonstrates that many phraseologisms are based on human physical experience and interaction with the environment.

Phraseological units constitute a special layer of language; they are lexically and semantically stable combinations. In cognitive linguistics, phraseologisms are interpreted as linguistic expressions of conceptual structures. V. Teliya refers to phraseological units as expressions of "cultural codes" in language and particularly emphasizes their national-cultural specificity.

The majority of phraseologisms are formed through metaphor and metonymy mechanisms. Metaphor creates new meaning by connecting two different conceptual domains. For example, in the phraseologism "to let slip from one's hands," physical action (letting go from hands) is transferred to abstract meaning (losing an opportunity). Metonymy is based on connections between adjacent or related concepts.

D. Dobrovolskiy and E. Piirainen, studying the conceptual motivation of phraseological units, determined that most of them are based on universal cognitive mechanisms, but each language has passed through its own specific cultural filter. This characteristic demonstrates the necessity of considering the cultural component in teaching phraseologisms.

Cognitive Methods in Teaching Phraseological Units

In traditional methodology, teaching phraseological units mainly includes the following stages: presenting a new phraseologism, explaining its meaning, providing translation, and reinforcement through exercises. However, this method does not create deep understanding in students, and phraseologisms are quickly forgotten.

The cognitive approach in teaching phraseological units is based on the following principles:

1. Principle of Conceptual Analysis. When presenting a phraseologism, its conceptual foundation and metaphorical model are explained. For example, when teaching the phraseologism "eyes filled with tears of joy," the conceptual metaphor "eyes are the mirror of emotions" is revealed, and the perception of tears as a sign of joy is analyzed.



2. Principle of Cultural Context. Information about the national-cultural characteristics of phraseologisms and their origins is provided. This facilitates students' understanding of the "internal form" of phraseological units and makes memorization easier.

3. Principle of Comparison. Comparison with similar phraseologisms in students' native language or known languages is carried out. This helps in understanding language specifics and preventing interference.

4. Principle of Cognitive Visualization. Visual representations of phraseologisms, schemes, and conceptual maps are created. Through visual means, semantic structures are perceived more clearly and firmly retained in memory.

A. Barsalou's research demonstrates that activating perceptual and motor experiences in learning language units significantly strengthens memory. Therefore, a multimodal approach in teaching phraseologisms—combining visual, audio, and kinesthetic elements—is recommended.

Forming Phraseological Competence

Phraseological competence is the ability to correctly understand, remember, and use phraseological units. Within the cognitive approach framework, this competence includes the following components:

Cognitive component – understanding the conceptual foundations, metaphorical models, and cultural meanings of phraseologisms.

Linguistic component – knowledge of the structure, grammatical features, and stylistic functions of phraseological units.

Pragmatic component – the skill of appropriately using phraseologisms in various communicative situations.

Research conducted by N. Amosova and D. Galinskaya demonstrates that lessons organized based on cognitive strategies increase phraseological competence by 35-40%. These results show significant advantages compared to traditional methods.

The cognitive approach emphasizes learning phraseologisms in context. F. Boers proposed the "contextual application" method, according to which students encounter phraseologisms in various texts and analyze their usage characteristics. This approach helps in understanding the functional aspects of phraseological units and using them freely in one's own speech.

Memory and Phraseological Units

From the perspective of cognitive psychology, memorizing phraseological units is a complex process that activates various types of memory. In long-term memory, phraseologisms are stored in the form of semantic networks connected through conceptual links.

In the cognitive approach, the following memory strategies are applied for teaching phraseologisms:

Elaboration – connecting the phraseologism with other knowledge and experiences

Organization – systematizing phraseologisms by thematic or conceptual groups

Visualization – creating figurative representations and mental maps

Repetition – based on the principle of spaced repetition with increasing intervals

Intercultural Phraseology

Phraseological units are considered a mirror of national culture and reflect each nation's characteristics of perceiving the world. The cognitive approach creates special opportunities in studying intercultural phraseology.

Z. Kövecses, studying universal and nation-specific metaphors, showed that many conceptual metaphors occur in different languages, but their expression methods and emphasized aspects differ. For example, the metaphor "anger is hot liquid" exists in many languages, but in each language it is expressed through its own specific phraseological units.

Understanding the cultural foundations of phraseologisms is of great importance in learning foreign languages. A. Sharifian proposed the concept of "cultural linguistics" and emphasized the necessity of mastering cultural concepts in the language learning process. The cognitive approach is precisely aimed at solving this task.

CONCLUSION

The application of the cognitive approach in teaching phraseological units marks a new stage in language learning methodology. This approach enables teaching phraseologisms not merely as ready-made phrases but as elements of the conceptual system and carriers of cultural knowledge.

Analyses demonstrate that cognitive methods facilitate deep understanding and long-term memory retention of phraseological units. Conceptual analysis, understanding metaphorical models, and considering cultural context create opportunities for forming solid phraseological competence in students.

Understanding the cognitive nature of phraseologisms served as the foundation for developing effective teaching strategies. Cognitive visualization, contextual learning, and comparison methods have proven themselves practically, significantly increasing students' phraseological competence.

From the perspective of intercultural communication, the cognitive approach serves to develop cultural competence through understanding phraseologisms belonging to different cultures and comparing them with each other. This holds particular significance in contemporary globalization conditions.

In the future, it is promising to further refine the cognitive approach in teaching phraseological units and integrate it with digital technologies. Modern software and interactive tools can enhance the effectiveness of cognitive methods.

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