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# Communicative Approach in Teaching a Foreign Language

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**Abstract:** The communicative method is by far the most effective way to learn the German language. It appeared abroad around the 70s of the last century, and came to our country around the mid-2000s. The communicative technique focused on the possibility of communication. Of the four “pillars” on which any language training is based (reading, writing, speaking and listening comprehension), increased attention is paid to the last two. The communicative method designed primarily to remove the fear of communication. Functionality implies that both words and grammatical forms assimilated immediately in the activity, based on its performance.

**Keywords:** communicative technique, communication, language learning, functionality, practical knowledge.

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As you know, the goal of teaching a foreign language is the practical knowledge of the language, the assimilation of the language system and the acquisition of language skills. However, experience shows that often after graduation, even the best students do not have the skills of spontaneous speech, their poor vocabulary and the uniformity of the design of grammatical structures felt.

Specially conducted studies have shown that more than 90% of foreign language training sessions mainly aimed at teaching the language system, and not at mastering it. The main subject and object of training in the traditional method is the teacher. He directs the types of speech activity, gives comments and organizes the learning process as a whole. At the same time, teaching methods and techniques not aimed at the formation and development of students' speech skills and abilities.

The traditional method of learning German or English also called grammar-translation. It consists in the systematic study of grammatical material, phonetics, forms the skills of translation and reading. Students compose dialogues, memorize them, learn words by topic, retell texts, and perform written grammar exercises. The main features of this approach are memorization of the material and thoroughness. A feature of the traditional methodology is that in the process of work, students must master all types of speech activity in a given volume.

Currently, the so-called communicative method of language acquisition is widely used. The communicative approach to language learning (communicative approach) is not a new technique at all: it appeared abroad around the 70s of the last century, and came to our country around the mid-2000s. Then all the learners of German began to complain, “Everyone understands, but they cannot speak”. Adherents of the communicative approach have embarked on the path of combating this discrepancy.

Since then, the communicative technique has changed significantly and has become widespread throughout the world. Initially, it involved group classes with a native speaker. From the very first lesson, teaching conducted in German. Later, the approach has undergone some changes, and now it used both in a group and in individual classes.

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Much said and written about its effectiveness. The results achieved by minimizing the use of the native language of the student during the classes. With this approach, it is very important to teach a person to think in a foreign language so that he perceives foreign speech without any association with his native language. With this method of teaching, the study of theoretical aspects minimized or absent altogether and the main attention paid to live communication, i.e., colloquial speech. It is often misunderstood that when using a communicative approach, unforgivably little time is devoted to the study of grammar. In fact, in the learning process, much attention and a sufficient amount of time given to both vocabulary and grammar, but their development is not the main goal of learning a foreign language.

Speaking about the educational materials used in the communicative teaching of a foreign language, it should be noted their almost unlimited variety. Teaching materials play a paramount role in stimulating the communicative use of language. Traditionally, there are three main types of educational materials: based on the text, based on the communicative task, realities. Communicative technique teaching German more focused on practical needs: grammar is present in a limited form as needed, vocabulary – as needed for practical tasks, practice – in the form of life situations. Discussion of real life situations attracts students, arouses keen interest and a desire to share their ideas. The main place in the communicative teaching of a foreign language occupied by game situations, work with a partner, and tasks for finding errors, which not only allow you to build up vocabulary, but also teach you to think analytically. Many proponents of the communicative approach support the use of authentic materials in the classroom. These can be various linguistic realities such as magazines, advertisements and newspapers or visual sources around which communication be built (maps, graphs, tables, etc.).

The main task of the communicative technique is to help the student get rid of the notorious language barrier. About 70% of the class in the communicative methodology is devoted to conversational practice on various topics. Yet it would be a mistake to assume that the communicative approach is exclusively conversations in German. The communicative approach designed to develop oral and written speech, vocabulary, grammar, listening and reading skills. The teacher goes through three stages of learning with the student: engagement (involvement), study (study) and activation (activation - use). At the engagement stage, the teacher involves the student in the learning process: he initiates an exciting discussion, offers to discuss a picture, a problem, a film, etc. At the study stage, the student is explained the grammatical topic and the use of new words and expressions, that is, they work to expand vocabulary and master grammar. At the stage of activation of knowledge, the student performs various exercises to consolidate new grammar and words. This may be a continuation of the discussion of the topic under study, but with the application of the acquired knowledge.

Like any other way of learning a language, the communicative approach has evolved over time, but its underlying principles have not changed. These include the following:

1. The student begins to speak German from the first lesson. Even those who learn a language from scratch, master a couple of dozen phrases in the first lesson. This allows you quickly get used to the sound of speech, prevents the appearance of a language barrier or eliminates it.
2. When learning a language using this technique, you do not need to choose: speak fluently or speak correctly. The task is to make the speech fluent and literate at the same time.

When teaching, modern authentic manuals are used. Carefully crafted German -language texts contain fascinating practical material that can be used in life and in professional activities.

The ability to speak competently is the main skill that the communicative technique is working to improve. Students taught not only to speak on different topics, but also to monitor the correctness of speech. In addition, the communicative approach successfully fights this fear: up to 70% of the lesson, time is devoted to the development of speaking skills. The communicative approach helps to remove both the language barrier and the psychological barrier: students lose their fear of speaking German. The more and more often the student speaks German, the faster he learns to formulate his thoughts. Moreover, in the classroom using the communicative methodology, students talk for most of the lesson. The teacher builds a dialogue in such a way that it is interesting for students to answer questions and they can use the knowledge gained to the maximum. The communicative method teaches coherent speech, various colloquial phrases and clichés that allow you later speak fluently.

Students learn not only to hear, but also to understand German speech. In the classroom, students listen to and analyze small audio and video materials together with the teacher. Usually such material used as a basis for discussion.

The communicative method of teaching German aimed at developing the ability spontaneously speak on various topics. In the classroom, only the target language is used. The teacher sometimes explains complex nuances in Russian, but 90% of the lesson conducted in German. This technique allows not only to “rearrange” to the use of the German language, but also to stop mentally translating Russian phrases into German and vice versa. Grammar and vocabulary studied for communication, and not just for show. The communicative technique assumes a very correct and simple principle for studying grammatical constructions: no one crams theory. The teacher explains this or that rule and, together with the students, begins to work it out in practice, bringing the skill of its use to automatism. They do the same with new words: no cramming, only repeated practical application.

Recently, it has become fashionable to talk about how children learn their mother tongue in order to try to copy this process when learning a foreign language. Remember how children learn the language: they first speak, and already in the process of communication, adults explain to them how to speak correctly. Therefore, if you ask any of us how a child learns pronunciation, the phonetics of his language, then most of us will say imitating parents. Children, unlike us, speak, even having a meager vocabulary and having no idea about grammar, are not afraid to make mistakes and do not judge themselves for their mistakes. The absence of complexes helps children to immerse themselves in a foreign language without unnecessary baggage. The communicative approach applied in much the same way: students discuss an interesting topic and learn to apply a new construction or vocabulary in the course of a conversation. For example, the teacher explains the second type of conditional sentences and suggests talking about dreams: Wenn ich viel Geld gewinnen würde, würde ich mir einen Ferrari kaufen (If I won a lot of money, I would buy a Ferrari). After 5-10 sentences, students easily memorize this construction and understand the principles of its use. That is, grammar and vocabulary are not actually the main object of study, but used as auxiliary material and learn automatically.

Life does not stand still, and the communicative technique continues to develop. Therefore, it began to use in individual form of education and in online lessons. Moreover, the communicative approach in German classes via Skype has its own distinctive features.

1. Individual approach. An individual approach means that the teacher adapts the training program for a particular student. After all, people differ from each other both in their natural properties (abilities), and in their ability to carry out educational and speech activities, and in their characteristics as individuals: personal experience, context of activity, a set of certain

feelings and emotions, interests, status (position) in the team. In German classes via Skype using the communicative method, the entire teacher's attention focused on only one student. This allows you to identify gaps in knowledge and quickly eliminate them. Thus, the student will not be too easy or too difficult in the classroom, he will have an incentive to develop, and at the same time, he will thoroughly understand all the topics studied.

2. Students' choice of the volume and type of homework. It is worth noting that you should not completely abandon homework, since homework is the best way to fix the material in memory and check how well it is learned. Homework with a communicative approach is never boring - it can be online tests and crosswords, songs and various resources in German to test knowledge.

3. Using grammar and vocabulary as an auxiliary material and learning them automatically. As in regular, classroom classes, in online classes, students do not learn the dry wording of the rules. They learn the natural use of grammatical constructions and useful words and expressions in practice.

4. Maximum practice in class. For most of the lesson, students practice speaking. A few minutes given to reading an interesting text, which subsequently becomes a topic for discussion. Assignments to improve writing and listening skills most often given at home. Therefore, you can listen to a text or write a letter, slowly, in a relaxed atmosphere. If something is not clear, the teacher will definitely come to the rescue and explain everything in class. This approach allows you to save time and work out the development of colloquial speech, because this skill, as a rule, is the most difficult to master. Thanks to this, the problem described at the beginning of the article solved: "I understand everything, but I can't speak."

5. The communicative technique, despite the lack of "novelty" and "innovative approach", has many advantages. Today it is undoubtedly the most effective way to learn German. Thus, we can say with confidence the communicative method of teaching German is suitable for absolutely everyone, and especially those who had a not very pleasant experience of learning a language from ancient textbooks will appreciate it. The communicative technique focused on the possibility of communication. Of the four "pillars" on which any language training is based (reading, writing, speaking and listening comprehension), increased attention is paid to the last two. The communicative method designed primarily to remove the fear of communication. Communication manifested in the functionality of learning. Functionality implies that both words and grammatical forms assimilated immediately in the activity, based on its performance. Based on the foregoing, we can conclude that communication is necessary in the learning process, since it serves to ensure that communication takes place in adequate conditions, such as taking into account the individuality of each student, the speech orientation of the learning process, the functionality of learning, the situational nature of communication, the constant novelty of the learning process.

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