



DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION SKILLS USING COGNITIVE APPROACH  
DURING FOREIGN LANGUAGE LESSONS

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**Abstract:** *In today's globalized world, mastering a foreign language is more than just learning grammar and vocabulary—it's about becoming an effective communicator. Among various methodologies, the cognitive approach has gained significant attention for its learner-centered, brain-based strategies. This article explores how foreign language lessons can benefit from cognitive approaches to enhance learners' communication skills, emphasizing thinking processes, memory, and understanding.*

**Keywords:** *cognitive approach, communication skills, foreign language learning, memory strategies, metacognition, task-based learning, language acquisition.*

### Introduction

Communication is the core goal of language learning. While traditional methods often focus on rote memorization and mechanical practice, modern educational psychology emphasizes the role of cognition—the way we think, remember, and solve problems. The cognitive approach in language learning prioritizes mental processes that support comprehension, production, and interaction in real-life contexts.

### What Is the Cognitive Approach?

The cognitive approach in language learning is based on how the brain processes information. It posits that language learning involves understanding, organizing, and applying knowledge rather than passive repetition. Key elements of this approach include:

Schema theory: Learners use background knowledge to understand new information.

Attention and perception: Focusing on meaningful input helps learners process language more deeply.

Memory strategies: Organizing and retrieving language chunks improves fluency.

Metacognition: Learners think about their own learning process, planning and evaluating their progress.

### How the Cognitive Approach Enhances Communication Skills

1. Meaningful Input and Output Language learners acquire communication skills more effectively when exposed to authentic, meaningful content. Through listening to real conversations, reading engaging texts, and participating in discussions, learners develop cognitive links between language forms and functions.

2. Task-Based Learning Tasks that require problem-solving, decision-making, or storytelling encourage learners to use the target language actively. These tasks engage higher-order thinking skills, making the learning process more memorable and effective.





3. Use of Cognitive Strategies Teaching learners to use strategies like summarizing, predicting, visualizing, and inferencing helps them become more independent. For example, predicting the content of a conversation based on context enhances listening comprehension and prepares learners to respond appropriately.

4. Scaffolded Practice With cognitive scaffolding, teachers guide learners from controlled to free practice. Starting with structured exercises and gradually moving to open-ended communication tasks builds confidence and competence.

5. Metacognitive Reflection Encouraging learners to reflect on what they've learned, what challenges they faced, and how they overcame them promotes self-awareness and adaptive thinking. This reflection enhances motivation and helps learners take control of their progress.

#### Practical Techniques for the Classroom

**Mind Mapping:** Use mind maps to organize vocabulary around topics, helping students visualize connections and use words in context.

**Think-Aloud Activities:** Have students verbalize their thought process while solving a language task. This technique helps them become aware of their own strategies.

**Dialogic Journals:** Encourage students to maintain written conversations with teachers or peers to develop expressive skills.

**Cognitive Modeling:** Teachers demonstrate how to approach language tasks step by step, providing a model for learners to emulate.

**Memory Games and Mnemonics:** Engage learners in fun activities that improve retention and retrieval of vocabulary and expressions.

#### **Conclusion**

The cognitive approach transforms foreign language classrooms into active, engaging spaces where learners think, reflect, and communicate. By focusing on how students process information and apply it in real-life contexts, teachers can help them develop lasting communication skills. In a world where the ability to connect across cultures is more important than ever, integrating cognitive strategies into language instruction is not just effective—it is essential.

