



FROM LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE TO THE EMERGENCE OF MEANING: A COGNITIVE-COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING A LINGUISTIC PERSONALITY IN TEACHING RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract. *This article proposes a cognitive-communicative strategy for developing a linguistic personality in teaching Russian as a foreign language. It explores the transformation of linguistic knowledge into meaningful speech through cognitive interpretation, personal reflection, and communicative practice. Particular attention is given to independent thinking, intercultural competence, and the purposeful use of digital technologies.*

Keywords: *Russian as a foreign language, linguistic personality, cognitive-communicative strategy, meaning-making, speech activity, communicative competence, reflection.*

In contemporary language education, knowing a foreign language can no longer be measured solely by the ability to memorize vocabulary, reproduce grammatical rules, or construct formally correct sentences. Genuine language proficiency becomes visible when learners can interpret information, formulate independent ideas, express personal attitudes, and participate meaningfully in communication. This understanding is particularly important in teaching Russian as a foreign language, where learners must move beyond the mechanical acquisition of linguistic forms toward the purposeful use of language as an instrument of thinking, self-expression, and intercultural interaction. Consequently, the central



methodological challenge is not simply to teach learners how Russian works, but to help them discover what they can understand, communicate, and create through Russian[1]. A persistent contradiction in foreign language education emerges between linguistic knowledge and actual communicative performance. Learners may demonstrate an adequate understanding of grammatical structures and lexical meanings while experiencing considerable difficulty when asked to express an unfamiliar idea, defend an opinion, or respond spontaneously to another speaker. This discrepancy suggests that knowledge of linguistic forms does not automatically develop the cognitive and communicative mechanisms necessary for independent speech production. Language may remain an external system of rules unless learners are encouraged to transform acquired knowledge into personally meaningful statements. The essential educational task, therefore, is to establish a learning environment in which linguistic competence develops in close connection with intellectual activity, contextual interpretation, and communicative experience[2].

This article proposes an original cognitive-communicative strategy for developing a linguistic personality in teaching Russian as a foreign language. The strategy is based on the idea that effective language learning involves the continuous transformation of linguistic information into personal understanding and purposeful speech. Within this approach, the learner is not merely a recipient of linguistic knowledge but an active participant in the construction of meaning. The learning process is organized around the relationship between perception, interpretation, personal positioning, speech production, and reflection. These interconnected processes provide a methodological framework for moving from the reproduction of predetermined language patterns toward the creation of independent and contextually appropriate utterances. The concept of a linguistic personality is understood here as the capacity of an individual to use language consciously, creatively, and appropriately in different communicative situations. Such a personality is able to select linguistic resources according to communicative intentions, interpret the meanings conveyed by others, construct coherent arguments, recognize contextual



implications, and revise personal statements when necessary[3]. This understanding extends beyond grammatical accuracy. Although correct language use remains essential, the development of a linguistic personality also requires semantic depth, logical organization, pragmatic awareness, and the ability to communicate an individual perspective. A learner becomes an independent language user not simply by knowing more words, but by developing the ability to make meaningful choices through those words.

The emergence of meaning occupies a central position in the proposed strategy. A lexical item becomes educationally valuable when the learner can connect it with experience, recognize its contextual implications, distinguish its possible interpretations, and use it to communicate an individual understanding. Consider the Russian word *ответственность* (responsibility). A conventional exercise may require students to translate the word, memorize its definition, and identify related vocabulary. A cognitive-communicative activity, by contrast, invites learners to examine situations involving responsibility, evaluate the decisions of different individuals, discuss possible consequences, and formulate their own understanding of the concept in Russian. In the first case, the learner acquires information about a word; in the second, the learner constructs meaning through language. This distinction illustrates the difference between lexical memorization and meaningful linguistic development.

The proposed strategy can be represented through the following methodological sequence: Linguistic Input → Cognitive Interpretation → Personal Meaning → Communicative Action → Reflective Development. This sequence should not be understood as a rigid linear procedure. Rather, it describes a dynamic process in which each component influences and enriches the others. New linguistic information modifies existing understanding, communication reveals gaps in comprehension, and reflection creates opportunities for further learning. Through repeated engagement in this process, learners gradually develop the ability to use Russian not only to reproduce previously learned material but also to interpret



unfamiliar information and communicate original ideas. The first component involves meaningful engagement with linguistic input. Learners encounter authentic or appropriately adapted texts, dialogues, audio materials, visual situations, and culturally significant concepts. The purpose of this stage is not merely to recognize vocabulary or grammatical structures but to establish an initial understanding of the communicative situation. Materials should therefore encourage curiosity, interpretation, and intellectual involvement. Questions such as “What is the speaker trying to achieve?”, “Why has the author chosen this expression?”, and “What additional meaning does the context create?” direct attention toward the relationship between linguistic form and communicative intention. This process encourages learners to recognize that meaning is shaped not only by individual words but also by context, purpose, and the relationship between speakers.

Cognitive interpretation constitutes the next important component. At this stage, learners identify the central idea, establish relationships between events, distinguish facts from opinions, examine the author's position, and compare alternative interpretations. Such activities activate analytical thinking and encourage the conscious use of language. For example, after reading a short narrative, students may be asked to determine whether a character's decision demonstrates courage, irresponsibility, or a combination of both. They must support their interpretation with evidence from the text and formulate their reasoning in Russian[4]. The task simultaneously develops reading comprehension, evaluative vocabulary, argumentation, and syntactic flexibility. Language learning thus becomes inseparable from the intellectual operations required to understand and interpret information. Personal meaning emerges when learners connect the interpreted material with their own experiences, observations, and perspectives. This component is particularly important because communication becomes more purposeful when learners have something meaningful to express. However, personal engagement should not be reduced to unstructured discussion. Learners need to transform individual impressions into coherent and linguistically appropriate statements.



Instead of simply saying, “I like this character,” they may explain which actions influenced their judgment, identify the character's motivations, and compare the situation with a real-life experience. Through this process, an initial emotional response develops into an articulated position. The learner gradually acquires the ability to move from spontaneous reaction to reasoned expression. Communicative action provides the practical environment in which constructed meaning is transformed into speech. Learners use Russian to accomplish specific tasks involving an intended audience, a communicative purpose, and a particular context. These tasks may include participating in discussions, conducting interviews, presenting arguments, resolving hypothetical problems, writing reflective texts, or simulating professional and everyday interactions. The essential requirement is that learners should make their own linguistic and intellectual decisions rather than merely reproduce prepared answers. They must choose appropriate vocabulary, organize their arguments, respond to unexpected questions, and clarify their intentions when communication becomes difficult. Such activities help establish a functional relationship between linguistic knowledge and real communicative performance[5].

Dialogue deserves particular attention within this framework because meaning is often developed through interaction. A learner's initial interpretation may be challenged by another person's perspective, prompting clarification, reconsideration, or the formulation of a more precise argument. Dialogue therefore becomes more than an opportunity to practise speaking; it becomes a mechanism for cognitive development[6]. Students learn to listen attentively, recognize the reasoning behind different opinions, ask relevant questions, express disagreement respectfully, and revise their statements in response to new information. These abilities are especially valuable in multilingual educational environments, where successful communication requires sensitivity to differences in cultural expectations and communicative conventions. Reflective development completes and renews the learning process. After a communicative activity, learners examine the effectiveness of their statements, evaluate the clarity of their arguments, identify lexical or



grammatical limitations, and consider whether their intended meaning was successfully conveyed. Reflection should address both linguistic accuracy and the organization of thought. A learner may produce a grammatically correct statement that fails to communicate the intended argument, just as a meaningful idea may remain unclear because of inappropriate word choice or insufficient cohesion. Recognizing these differences helps learners understand the multidimensional nature of communicative competence. Errors become valuable sources of diagnostic information, enabling learners to identify the specific difficulties that require further attention.

The teacher plays a crucial role in organizing this process. Within the cognitive-communicative strategy, the teacher functions as a facilitator of meaning construction, a designer of communicative situations, and a guide who supports learners in developing independent speech. Rather than providing immediate solutions to every difficulty, the teacher can encourage students to reconsider an interpretation, compare alternative expressions, examine contextual evidence, or formulate a more precise argument. This approach does not eliminate explicit instruction. Grammar explanations, vocabulary clarification, pronunciation practice, and corrective feedback remain necessary, but they are integrated into meaningful communicative tasks[7]. Linguistic knowledge becomes a resource for solving problems rather than an isolated learning objective.

An important methodological principle is the integration of reading, listening, speaking, and writing around a shared intellectual purpose. Reading can provide the basis for interpretation, listening can introduce alternative viewpoints, speaking can facilitate discussion, and writing can support the systematic organization of ideas. For instance, a lesson on intercultural communication might begin with a short text describing a misunderstanding between speakers from different cultural backgrounds. Learners would identify the source of the misunderstanding, examine the expressions used by the participants, discuss alternative interpretations, and propose more effective ways of communicating. They



could then write recommendations for avoiding similar misunderstandings. In this way, the four language skills become interconnected components of a single meaning-oriented learning experience[8]. The development of a linguistic personality also requires attention to the cultural and pragmatic dimensions of Russian. Expressions that appear grammatically equivalent may differ in politeness, emotional intensity, social appropriateness, or communicative effect. Learners therefore need opportunities to examine how language choices change according to the relationship between speakers, the degree of formality, and the purpose of interaction. Comparing ways of making requests, expressing disagreement, offering advice, or responding to criticism can help learners recognize the relationship between linguistic form and social meaning. Such comparison should not present one language or culture as superior to another. Instead, it should encourage learners to develop intercultural awareness and select appropriate communicative strategies in different contexts.

Digital technologies offer additional opportunities to implement the proposed approach. Interactive platforms, speech-recognition systems, virtual conversation partners, and artificial intelligence applications can provide learners with extended opportunities to practise Russian beyond the classroom. These tools may simulate everyday situations, support vocabulary development, offer feedback on language use, and help learners monitor their progress. Nevertheless, technological accessibility does not automatically result in meaningful learning. If digital activities consist primarily of selecting predetermined answers or copying generated texts, learners may remain dependent on external support. Digital environments become more educationally valuable when students must formulate original questions, evaluate suggested information, explain their decisions, and revise their own statements. Artificial intelligence can be used as a supplementary conversational partner that creates opportunities for repeated practice. A learner might participate in a simulated discussion about education, environmental responsibility, cultural traditions, or professional communication. After the



interaction, the learner could examine the coherence of responses, the precision of vocabulary, the relevance of arguments, and the ability to maintain a dialogue. The same task could then be repeated with the aim of improving identified weaknesses. This approach transforms digital interaction into a cycle of practice, feedback, and reflective development. At the same time, learners should be encouraged to evaluate generated information critically, since automated systems may misunderstand context, provide inaccurate explanations, or fail to recognize subtle pragmatic distinctions[9]. The teacher remains responsible for ensuring that technological tools support rather than replace independent thinking.

The effectiveness of the cognitive-communicative strategy should be evaluated through multiple indicators. These include the ability to interpret information, formulate independent ideas, construct coherent statements, select appropriate linguistic resources, justify opinions, respond to interlocutors, and reflect on communicative difficulties. Particular attention should be given to the transfer of acquired skills to unfamiliar situations. A learner who can successfully reproduce a prepared dialogue may still struggle when the topic changes or an unexpected question arises. The ability to adapt linguistic knowledge to new communicative conditions provides stronger evidence of developing independence than performance on repetitive exercises alone[10]. The strategy can be examined empirically through initial and final diagnostic tasks, observation of classroom interaction, analysis of oral and written production, and assessment of learners' reflective reports. For a systematic investigation, researchers should establish transparent assessment criteria, document learners' initial proficiency, and compare their performance after a defined period of instruction. Indicators might include the complexity of independent speech, the coherence of arguments, the appropriateness of vocabulary, the ability to sustain interaction, and the quality of self-correction. Such procedures would make it possible to investigate which components of the strategy contribute most significantly to communicative development. The proposed approach should therefore be regarded as a methodological framework whose effectiveness requires



empirical examination rather than as a model whose outcomes can be assumed in advance.

The distinctive contribution of this approach lies in the integration of linguistic learning, cognitive engagement, personal meaning, and communicative action within a unified educational process. Traditional methods and exercises remain valuable, but their organization is guided by a broader objective: enabling learners to use language as a means of understanding and transforming information into meaningful communication. Grammar becomes a resource for expressing relationships between ideas; vocabulary becomes a means of conceptualizing experience; texts become spaces for interpretation; and dialogue becomes an opportunity for developing and testing understanding. The learner's progress is consequently measured not only by the amount of linguistic information acquired but also by the ability to use that information independently, appropriately, and creatively. Ultimately, the transition from linguistic knowledge to the emergence of meaning represents a fundamental shift in the purpose of teaching Russian as a foreign language. The learner moves from reproducing external linguistic patterns toward constructing personal interpretations, articulating independent positions, and participating confidently in communication. The cognitive-communicative strategy creates conditions in which language learning becomes an integrated process of intellectual, linguistic, and personal development. Its central principle can be expressed as follows: a language is not fully mastered when its rules can be repeated, but when its resources can be used to understand the world, formulate original ideas, and establish meaningful connections with others. The formation of a linguistic personality therefore requires an educational environment in which every word can become a starting point for thought, every dialogue an opportunity for discovery, and every act of communication a step toward greater independence.

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