THE THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF A PSYCHOLINGUISTIC APPROACH TO THE FORMATION OF LINGUISTIC THINKING IN STUDENTS

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Abstract: This article examines the theoretical and practical aspects of applying a psycholinguistic approach to the formation of linguistic thinking in students. The study analyzes the interrelation of language and thought, the role of cognitive and psychological processes in shaping linguistic competence, and the integration of psycholinguistic principles into higher education. Particular attention is given to practical methods such as communicative tasks, cognitive training, and interactive technologies, which foster the development of students' critical, creative, and independent thinking. The findings highlight that the psycholinguistic approach not only enhances linguistic knowledge but also contributes to students' communicative competence and personal development, thereby meeting the requirements of modern education.

Keywords: linguistic thinking, psycholinguistics, higher education, cognitive processes, communicative competence, pedagogical approach, interactive technologies

Introduction.

In the twenty-first century, the issue of shaping students 'personalities in higher education, preparing them not only as specialists but also as socially active, independent, and creative individuals, has become increasingly urgent. Within this process, the development of linguistic thinking occupies a central role. Since thought and language are inseparably linked, a person's ability to acquire knowledge, comprehend meaning, and express ideas is formed precisely through language.

Psycholinguistics, as a science that studies how human thought operates through language, plays a significant role not only theoretically but also practically in education. Applying a psycholinguistic approach to the development of linguistic thinking in students is considered one of the most effective ways of enhancing cognitive activity and cultivating independent thought in higher education institutions. The development of linguistic thinking in students is closely tied to understanding the nature of thought and its application in pedagogy.

Thought, as the highest form of human consciousness, represents the process of perceiving, analyzing, and generalizing reality. Linguistic thinking, on the other hand, is the form of cognition expressed through language. It reflects not only students 'intellectual development but also their communicative culture, speech activity, and social competence.

The main task of psycholinguistics is to investigate the relationship between thought and language processes. According to the scientific views of L.S. Vygotsky, A.A. Leontyev, and other scholars, thought is formed through language, while speech activity is considered the external expression of thought. Guiding this process properly in students requires advanced pedagogical skills. In higher education, the peculiarity of developing linguistic thinking lies in the fact that students do not merely memorize material but also analyze, evaluate, and draw new conclusions. When this process is organized on the basis of a psycholinguistic approach, its effectiveness increases significantly. The approach develops students 'abilities to perceive, memorize, understand, process, and articulate information as a unified process of cognition.

Pedagogical advantages of the psycholinguistic approach include:

• **Enhancing perception** – enabling students to grasp learning material more deeply.

• **Strengthening memory processes** – ensuring long-term retention of knowledge.

• **Shaping independent thinking skills** – training students to express ideas logically and consistently.

• **Developing communicative competence** – enabling students to convey thoughts clearly in speech.

• **Encouraging innovative approaches** – improving learning efficiency through modern technologies.

Main Text. Interactive methods such as debates, role plays, and group discussions stimulate students 'speech activity and activate thought processes. Multimedia tools, including audiovisual materials, help broaden students 'perceptions and imagination. Importantly, psycholinguistics is not confined to linguistics or pedagogy but is closely connected with cognitive sciences, psychology, and communication studies. Thus, the development of linguistic thinking in students requires an interdisciplinary, integrated approach. The pedagogical opportunities of psycholinguistics extend beyond effective teaching tasks to include consideration of students 'psychological characteristics. Each student's perception, memory capacity, and communicative abilities differ. Therefore, teachers must apply an individualized approach to maximize the effectiveness of psycholinguistic methods.

Effective methods in this regard include:

• **Discourse analysis** – extracting and reformulating key ideas from texts.

• **Interactive tasks** – promoting active speech activity in group settings.

• **Role plays and problem-solving situations** – encouraging quick, creative thinking.

• **Cognitive exercises** – reinforcing concepts, categories, and logical relationships.

Experiments show that classes based on a psycholinguistic approach significantly activate students 'speech activity. They not only acquire knowledge but also generate independent conclusions, substantiate their viewpoints, and develop critical thinking skills. The analysis shows that the psycholinguistic approach has broad pedagogical potential in the development of students 'linguistic thinking. It contributes to the formation of speech and thought activity, as well as independence, creativity, and communicative competence. Integrated with innovative technologies, the psycholinguistic approach increases the effectiveness of the educational process and meets the requirements of modern education. Therefore, in higher education institutions, it is necessary to improve methods for developing students 'linguistic thinking based on psycholinguistic principles, to create new linguodidactic models, and to implement them in practice.

The relationship between language and thought has long been regarded as one of the most fundamental issues in human development. The concept of linguistic thinking is directly linked to human cognitive abilities, psychological activity, and speech practice. Language manifests itself as the external form of thought, while thought functions as an internal mechanism expressed through language. Therefore, in the higher education system, preparing students for linguistic activity and shaping their communicative competence requires the purposeful development of linguistic thinking, which constitutes one of the key scientific and pedagogical tasks. In this regard, the theoretical foundations and technological approaches of psycholinguistics play a decisive role. Psycholinguistics, as a discipline that studies the interrelation of language and thought, the processes of speech production and perception, and the mechanisms by which linguistic units are formed and applied in human consciousness, provides essential methodological foundations for students. This process necessitates not only the principles of theoretical linguistics but also the integration of psychology, cognitive science, and neurolinguistics. This is because linguistic thinking is shaped not only by language knowledge but also in harmony with psychological processes such as perception, memory, imagination, attention, and motivation. Consequently, a psycholinguistic approach serves as an effective mechanism for developing students 'communicative competence.

The first stage in forming linguistic thinking in higher education is the acquisition of theoretical knowledge. At this stage, students gain an understanding of the structure of language, including its phonetic, lexical, grammatical, and stylistic systems. However, theoretical knowledge alone is insufficient, since genuine linguistic activity and thinking are formed primarily through practice. In this respect, psycholinguistic technologies—including communicative approaches, text-based exercises, modeling of speech activity, interactive methods, and cognitive training—are of paramount importance.

A key feature of the psycholinguistic approach is that it not only increases the level of knowledge but also takes into account the student's personal experience, psychological characteristics, and motivational factors. The speed of perception, memory capacity, readiness for communication, interest in language, and volitional qualities are among the fundamental criteria in the development of linguistic thinking. Thus, the linguodidactic process is naturally grounded in psycholinguistic mechanisms. For example, in teaching a foreign language, it is insufficient to rely solely on grammatical rules. Activities based on real communicative situations train students to apply linguistic units more rapidly and effectively. As a result, linguistic knowledge shifts from a passive state to active speech performance.

In the process of linguistic thinking, three main stages can be observed: perception and comprehension, the formation of inner speech, and expression through external speech. Psycholinguistic research demonstrates that each stage is defined by specific psychological mechanisms. During perception, semantic analysis, phonological encoding, and grammatical structuring take place. At the inner speech stage, concepts and ideas are encoded in linguistic form. External speech, meanwhile, finds its practical realization through pronunciation, writing, or interaction. Each of these stages must be cultivated in the linguodidactic process through targeted exercises and methods. Another important advantage of applying the psycholinguistic approach in developing linguistic thinking is the possibility of organizing the educational process in interactive and innovative forms. Today, digital technologies, multimedia resources, and e-learning platforms are integrated with psycholinguistic technologies to provide new opportunities for students. For instance, multimedia texts, audio-visual materials, and interactive programs help students not only to comprehend spoken language but also to process visual information, extract meaning from context, and use working memory effectively. This, in turn, develops both the semantic and pragmatic aspects of linguistic thinking.

Equally significant is the integration of cognitive linguistics with psycholinguistics in

the formation of linguistic thinking. The cognitive approach emphasizes the conceptual structuring of linguistic units in the student's mind, whereas psycholinguistics examines how these structures are applied in speech activity. Consequently, students 'linguistic knowledge is shaped not merely at the level of abstract rules but also at the level of practical application in real communicative situations. This directly contributes to the fundamental mission of higher education: the preparation of competitive, independent, and creative specialists.

Conclusion. The linguodidactic foundations of the psycholinguistic approach also play an important role in students 'personal development. Since thought is shaped through language, and language reflects thought, the worldview, values, and social relations of the individual are enriched. In a learning process grounded in psycholinguistic technologies, students acquire not only knowledge but also communicative competence, creative thinking, critical reflection, and intercultural communication skills. In the context of globalization, the development of linguistic thinking is not only a linguistic task but also one deeply connected with socio-cultural processes. Language simultaneously functions as a means of communication, a carrier of culture, and a mechanism for the formation of individual thought. Psycholinguistics assists in harmonizing these multiple functions in the student's consciousness. Thus, employing psycholinguistic mechanisms in the linguodidactic process represents a scientifically grounded pathway for the effective development of linguistic thinking. In conclusion, it can be stated that the formation of linguistic thinking in students is one of the central tasks of modern pedagogy. The effective organization of this process requires the theoretical foundations of psycholinguistics, methods that enhance cognitive processes, and innovative technologies. When linguodidactic approaches are integrated with psycholinguistic mechanisms, students not only acquire linguistic knowledge but also develop the ability to think independently, critically, and creatively in real communicative contexts. This, ultimately, fulfills the main mission of higher education: the preparation of well-rounded, intellectually capable specialists.

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