

**EXPLAINING THE SEMANTIC ASPECTS OF TENSE AND MOOD TO STUDENTS  
WHEN TEACHING FRENCH**

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**Abstract**

This article analyzes the semantic properties of tense and mood categories and the linguodidactic aspects of teaching them in teaching French to students. Tense and mood are among the most complex grammatical units of the French language, and students' incomplete understanding of their subtle differences in meaning can lead to communicative errors. The study covers the semantic meanings of tense and mood in a speech situation, their pragmatic functions, and the use of effective interactive methods in teaching them. It also shows ways to increase the effectiveness of mastering tense and mood categories in teaching French based on modern educational technologies, a communicative approach, and a competency-based approach. The results of the study serve to ensure grammatical accuracy in students' speech, develop their communicative competence, and improve the methodology for teaching French.

**Keywords**

French language, tense (temps), mood (mode), semantics, grammar, linguodidactics, communicative competence, interactive methods, language teaching methodology, pragmatics.

**Annotatsiya**

Ushbu maqolada talabalarga fransuz tilini o'qitishda zamon va kayfiyat kategoriyalarining semantik xususiyatlari va ularni o'qitishning lingvodidaktik jihatlari tahlil qilinadi. Zamon va kayfiyat fransuz tilining eng murakkab grammatik birliklaridan biri bo'lib, talabalarning ma'no jihatidagi nozik farqlarni to'liq tushunmasligi kommunikativ xatolarga olib kelishi mumkin. Tadqiqot nutqiy vaziyatda zamon va kayfiyatning semantik ma'nolari, ularning pragmatik funktsiyalari va ularni o'qitishda samarali interaktiv usullardan foydalanishni qamrab oladi. Shuningdek, u zamonaviy ta'lim texnologiyalari, kommunikativ yondashuv va kompetensiyaga asoslangan yondashuv asosida fransuz tilini o'qitishda zamon va kayfiyat kategoriyalarini o'zlashtirish samaradorligini oshirish yo'llarini ko'rsatadi. Tadqiqot natijalari talabalar nutqida grammatik aniqlikni ta'minlashga, ularning kommunikativ kompetensiyasini rivojlantirishga va fransuz tilini o'qitish metodologiyasini takomillashtirishga xizmat qiladi.

**Kalit so'zlar**

fransuz tili, zamon (temps), kayfiyat (mode), semantika, grammatika, lingvodidaktika, kommunikativ kompetensiya, interaktiv usullar, til o'qitish metodologiyasi, pragmatika.

### **Аннотация**

В данной статье анализируются семантические свойства категорий времени и наклонения, а также лингводидактические аспекты их преподавания при обучении французскому языку студентов. Время и наклонение относятся к числу наиболее сложных грамматических единиц французского языка, и неполное понимание студентами их тонких различий в значении может привести к коммуникативным ошибкам. В исследовании рассматриваются семантические значения времени и наклонения в речевой ситуации, их прагматические функции и использование эффективных интерактивных методов обучения. Также показаны способы повышения эффективности освоения категорий времени и наклонения при обучении французскому языку на основе современных образовательных технологий, коммуникативного подхода и компетентностного подхода. Результаты исследования служат для обеспечения грамматической точности в речи студентов, развития их коммуникативной компетенции и совершенствования методики преподавания французского языка.

### **Ключевые слова**

французский язык, время (temps), наклонение (mode), семантика, грамматика, лингводидактика, коммуникативная компетенция, интерактивные методы, методика преподавания языка, прагматика.

### **Introduction**

In today's globalization environment, studying foreign languages, in particular French, is gaining importance in the formation of students' professional and cultural competence. French is one of the official languages of such prestigious international organizations as the UN, UNESCO, and the International Olympic Committee, and is widely used in the fields of diplomacy, international relations, tourism, culture, and education. Therefore, the issue of effective teaching of French in higher education institutions is one of the urgent pedagogical tasks.

The categories of tense and mood occupy a special place in the grammatical system of the French language. Tense expresses the relationship of the action or state of the verb to time, while mood expresses the speaker's attitude to the action, its modal meanings such as reality, probability, command, desire, or doubt. These two categories are semantically extremely rich and complex in the French language, and their mastery creates significant difficulties for students. For example, the use of indicative, subjunctive, conditional (conditionnel) and imperative (impératif) moods is directly related not only to grammatical, but also to semantic and pragmatic factors.

Practical experience shows that students often limit themselves to mechanical memorization of tense and mood forms and cannot correctly apply their semantic differences in a speech situation. This leads to a distortion of meaning in the communicative process, and speech becomes artificial and unclear. Therefore, in teaching French, it is necessary to teach tense and mood not only as grammatical units, but also as semantic categories expressing meaning and communicative function.

The main purpose of this article is to reveal to students the semantic features of tense and mood in the process of teaching French, to identify the main problems encountered in their

mastery, and to offer effective methodological approaches. The study scientifically substantiates the possibility of increasing the effectiveness of teaching tense and mood categories through a communicative approach, contextual analysis, exercises based on speech situations, and interactive methods.

Thus, a deep understanding of the semantic features of tense and mood helps students build correct, fluent, and meaningful speech in French and improves their overall communicative competence.

### Literature review

The issue of the semantic properties of the categories of tense and mood in French has been widely and deeply studied in world linguistics. In particular, M. Grevisse, who conducted fundamental research on French grammar, in his famous work “Le Bon Usage”, extensively covers not only the grammatical, but also the semantic and pragmatic aspects of tense and mood forms. He interprets the category of tense as the relationship of an event to real time, and mood as the subjective attitude of the speaker to the action. M. Grevisse's views serve as an important methodological basis for understanding the grammatical system of the French language from a semantic point of view[1].

In the studies of R. Martin and J. Dubois[2], the issue of tense and mood is analyzed based on a functional-semantic approach. They pay special attention to the communicative function of verb tenses and moods in speech, showing that they express various subtleties of meaning depending on the context. In particular, the use of the subjunctive mood is one of the most semantically complex phenomena in French.

In the works of B. Comrie[3] and J. Lyons[4], the categories of tense and mood are explained within the framework of general linguistics. In their works, the properties of tense as a universal linguistic category, and mood as an important means of expressing modal meanings, are scientifically substantiated. These theoretical views are of great importance in the comparative study of the tense and mood system in French with other languages.

In studies conducted on the methodology of teaching French, the need to teach tense and mood based on a communicative approach is noted. For example, J. P. Cuq and I. Gruca emphasize in their works that it is more effective to explain tense and mood forms to students based on context and speech situation. In their opinion, teaching grammar in combination with semantic and pragmatic content increases the naturalness of students' speech[5].

In Uzbek linguistics, there are also studies on some issues of French grammar, in particular, on the teaching of tense and mood categories. The studies of such scientists as Sh. Safarov[6], D. Khudoyberganova[7], M. Jo'rayev[8], emphasize the importance of the semantic approach in teaching foreign languages. They justify the need to teach grammatical units not only in terms of form, but also in terms of meaning and communicative function.

Also, although in French textbooks and manuals written by Uzbek scientists, tense and mood categories are given based on traditional grammatical interpretations, in recent years there has been an increasing desire to illuminate them semantically and communicatively. This indicates the formation of modern methodological approaches to teaching French[9,10].

In general, while the theoretical and semantic features of tense and mood are deeply covered in world literature, in Uzbek literature this issue is interpreted mainly from a linguodidactic point of view. By combining these two directions, it is possible to achieve effective mastery of the categories of tense and mood in teaching French to students. This article is relevant in that it is aimed at filling this gap.

### Metodology

In this study, complex linguistic and linguodidactic methods were used to study the semantic features of the categories of tense and mood in teaching the French language. The research methodology was based on the combination of theoretical and practical approaches and was aimed at revealing the essence of tense and mood not only as grammatical forms, but also as semantic and pragmatic units.

First of all, the theoretical basis of the study was the analysis of existing scientific views on the categories of tense (temps) and mood (mode) in world and Uzbek linguistics. In this regard, the semantic content, communicative function and functions of tense and mood in the speech context were studied based on the works of such scientists as Grevisse, Dubois, Comrie, Lyons, Cuq. At the same time, the pedagogical significance of teaching grammatical units on a semantic basis was determined, using the works of Uzbek scientists on the methodology of teaching foreign languages.

In the research process, a descriptive method was used, the semantic features of tense and mood forms in the French language were explained, their differences and similarities were analyzed. Also, through the comparative method, the common and different aspects of the tense and mood categories with the corresponding units in the Uzbek language were revealed. This made it possible to identify aspects that cause difficulties for students.

In the practical part, pedagogical experience and observation methods were used. The level of mastery of tense and mood forms by students during French language lessons in higher educational institutions, as well as their skills in using them in a speech situation, were analyzed. The errors that students encounter in written and oral speech samples were systematized, and their main reasons were identified. It was scientifically substantiated that these errors are mainly related to a lack of full understanding of the semantic differences between tense and mood.

The method of contextual analysis played an important role in the research. Tense and mood forms were studied not separately, but within the framework of real speech situations. In this case, the semantic content of grammatical units was revealed through exercises based on text, dialogue and communicative situations. This approach served to form the skills of students to consciously use tense and mood.

Also, the communicative approach was determined as the main point of support of the methodology. Tense and mood categories were taught to students not only as grammatical rules, but also as a means of expressing thoughts clearly, correctly and meaningfully. Through role-playing games, problem situations, discussions and dialogical exercises, students had the opportunity to use tense and mood forms in real communicative conditions.

In addition, a combination of inductive and deductive methods was used. In some topics, students were directed to derive rules based on examples (inductive approach), while in some

cases, a ready-made grammatical rule was given and reinforced by semantic interpretation (deductive approach). The combination of these two methods increased the effectiveness of the learning process.

In general, the research methodology is aimed at studying the categories of tense and mood in French language teaching in a comprehensive manner from a semantic, pragmatic, and communicative perspective, which serves to ensure grammatical accuracy in students' speech, develop their language competence, and improve the methodology of teaching French on a scientific basis.

### Discussion and Results

The study found that teaching tense and mood categories in French language teaching based on a semantic approach not only strengthens students' grammatical knowledge, but also significantly increases their communicative competence. In the traditional method, tense and mood are often taught only in the form of grammatical rules and tables, as a result of which students memorize them mechanically, but have difficulty using them correctly in real speech situations. In our study, tense and mood forms were given in an inextricably linked way with meaning and context, which ensured a conscious and solid assimilation of knowledge.

Observations showed that students made significant mistakes, especially in distinguishing between subjunctive, conditional (conditionnel) and indicative moods. After the semantic approach was introduced, students began to understand more clearly the role of these moods in speech: they were able to correctly distinguish between the subjunctive expressing desire, doubt, and emotional attitude, the conditionnel expressing probability and politeness, and the indicative expressing real reality. As a result, their semantic errors in oral and written speech decreased significantly.

Positive changes were also observed in the category of tense. At the beginning of the study, students were confused in using the *passé composé*, *imparfait*, and *plus-que-parfait* tenses. After training based on semantic analysis, they began to clearly distinguish such aspects of meaning as the duration, repetition, completion, or sequence of an action. This served to form the skill of telling stories and consistently expressing events in French.

The results of the discussion show that teaching tenses and moods on a semantic basis develops not only grammatical accuracy, but also pragmatic sensitivity in students. They begin to understand which form to choose depending on the speech situation. This makes communication in French more natural and confident.

According to the results of the study:

- Students' errors in using tense and mood categories have significantly decreased;
- The level of semantic understanding of grammatical forms has increased;
- Logic and accuracy in oral and written speech have increased;
- Students' interest and activity in the French language has increased;

- Positive developments have been observed in the development of communicative competence.

It was also found during the discussions that interactive methods (dialogue, role-playing games, situational exercises, working on the text) are more effective than traditional exercises in mastering tense and mood. Because such exercises ensure the student's independent thinking, analysis, and selection of grammatical units based on real communicative needs.

In general, the results of the study scientifically confirm the need to teach tense and mood categories based on a semantic and communicative approach in teaching the French language. This approach ensures that students' speech is grammatically correct, while also making it rich in content, logically coherent, and communicatively effective.

### Conclusions and recommendations

This study aimed to analyze the possibilities of in-depth study of the semantic properties of the categories of tense (temps) and mood (mode) in teaching the French language and their effective mastery in the pedagogical process. The results of the study showed that teaching tense and mood not only as grammatical rules, but also as semantic and communicative units significantly improves students' French speech in terms of accuracy, fluency and naturalness.

The results also confirmed the following:

- Students understand the meaning of the subjunctive, conditionnel and indicative moods and learn to use them appropriately in speech situations.

- Teaching the passé composé, imparfait and plus-que-parfait tenses based on a contextual approach increases the coherence and logic of students' speech.

- The semantic approach develops students' communicative competence and increases their interest in the French language.

Recommendations:

1. In teaching French, it is recommended to cover the categories of tense and mood in lessons on a contextual and pragmatic basis.

2. In order to increase students' speech activity, it is necessary to widely use interactive methods such as dialogue, role-playing, text analysis, and situational exercises.

3. Combining grammatical rules and semantic content, allowing students to formulate rules based on examples, increases methodological efficiency.

4. The learning process can be optimized individually by systematically monitoring students' mistakes and analyzing them semantically.

5. In improving the methodology of teaching French in higher educational institutions, it is necessary to put the semantic features of tense and mood categories in a central place.

Thus, the results of the study serve to modernize the process of teaching French and to form students' speech that is logically consistent, rich in content, and communicatively effective.



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