

The Craft of Teaching Arabic (phonology, vocabulary, syntax)

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Abstract

Applied linguistics is a subfield of linguistics that emerged in 1946, at a time when interest in the challenges of teaching living languages to foreigners was growing, alongside the flourishing of applied studies. Applied linguistics is closely linked to language teaching, particularly to structural and descriptive linguistics, which have significantly influenced language teaching methods and exercises. These exercises are considered the most important and effective tools in linguistic education. This paper aims to explore the nature, function, and role of language exercises in the language acquisition process. We will also examine structural exercises, their pedagogical approaches, types, and procedural applications, as well as the critiques directed at them. Furthermore, we will discuss communicative exercises and their effectiveness in mastering sentence structures and constructing grammatically correct sentences. The goal of this research is to provide a clear overview of the scientific standards used in designing language exercises, their linguistic content, and the tasks involved. It will also present an understanding of the characteristics, functions, and placement of exercises within a lesson plan.

Keywords: *Language Exercise, Structural Exercises, Communicative Exercises.*

Received: 14-09-2024.

Accepted: 14-03-2025

Introduction

In language teaching, language exercises serve as a pedagogical cornerstone, allowing learners to develop the practical ability to engage in linguistic events. This is achieved by understanding the fundamental models that form the syntactic framework of the language system to be taught. Consequently, researchers in both linguistic and educational fields have focused on identifying the most effective ways to enhance these exercises, clarify their educational and pedagogical objectives, and fine-tune their implementation to overcome the challenges teachers face, minimizing linguistic errors that hinder the progress of the language acquisition process, especially in foreign language learning.

Today, those who embark on learning languages—especially foreign ones—are not only focused on reading and writing but are more eager to understand and speak the language fluently. Achieving this goal is not an easy task, as comprehension and speaking are among the most difficult and complex language skills. Both require significant practice since language acquisition is entirely based on repeated use and exercise. When practice halts, so does linguistic development and the language faculty begins to deteriorate, even if one has memorized all the rules. Thus, the issue is not about memorization but about continuous practice and usage, a principle emphasized by scholars of the past and reinforced by modern linguists.

Al-Jahiz, for instance, believed that practice is the foundation of learning anything, and any organ that is not exercised becomes stiff, just like a hand that becomes calloused from lack of use. Similarly, Al-Mubarrad held a similar view, asserting that the tongue, like the body, becomes flexible when exercised and stiffens when neglected. Studies analyzing linguistic errors have shown that about forty grammar rules tend to generate frequent mistakes, and it might be useful to focus on these rules for reinforcement and practice. Consequently, the educational process should have clear, behavioral, and linguistic objectives, with language exercises playing a crucial role—not just in grammar, but across all areas of language learning. Revising the curriculum and assessment criteria is also essential to ensure that language exercises are given the prominence they deserve.

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Ibn Khaldun, the renowned scholar, argued that linguistic proficiency is acquired only through repeated practice—through the frequent use and repetition of Arabic speech, thereby internalizing the rules of its syntax. Repetition, as emphasized by Harold Palmer (1949, 1977), is key to forming language habits rather than just theoretical knowledge. Thus, repetition is essential for cementing correct language patterns. Any approach that neglects repetition fails to equip learners with the desired linguistic competence. Recent linguistic research in the United States, Europe, and the Arab world clearly demonstrates the central role of both oral and written language exercises in language teaching.

Concept of Language Exercise:

The term "exercise" is defined in *Lisān al-‘Arab* as meaning "softening," derived from the verb **maran** (مَرَّنَ), which signifies flexibility or malleability. It refers to the state of being soft within rigidity and pliability. To *maran* something means to train or accustom it until it becomes accustomed to a certain task or pattern. In this context, it refers to the repeated practice of an action, which strengthens and maintains the ability to perform it (Ibn Manzour al-Afrīqī, 1955, 1992, p. 403).

In *Al-Qāmūs al-Muhīṭ*, the term "exercise" is derived from **maran**, **marāna**, and **marūna**: "because it involves toughness, and its flexibility is to soften it." Additionally, the term can refer to something that has become accustomed to a certain action through repeated practice, e.g., *maran* means to "make it flexible" or "accustom someone to something through repeated practice" (al-Fayrūzābādī, p. 237).

Al-Ghazālī defines *exercise* as consistent repetition of the same action or pattern over an extended period (Ahmad al-Ghazālī, p. 57).

In his *Al-Khaṣā’iṣ*, Ibn Jinnī explains that "the word *maran* refers to familiarizing oneself with an action, just as the tongue becomes accustomed to speech through practice. He draws parallels between *maran* and qualities like ease and constant repetition, suggesting that exercise, training, and refinement all converge in the act of continuous engagement" (Ibn Jinnī, p. 48).

The term *maran* is also mentioned by Al-Zamakhsharī, who states that it refers to becoming accustomed to something, and that "the practice of *maran* involves familiarizing oneself with something continuously through repetition." For example, "training the hand for work" means making it capable of consistent action through continued practice (Al-Zamakhsharī, p. 427).

The verb *maran* follows a pattern similar to *ta‘allama* (تَعَلَّمَ) and *tahassan* (تَحَسَّنَ), meaning repetitive training or practice (Abbas, p. 189).

These early definitions align closely with modern psychological definitions, such as the one found in the *Dictionary of Psychology*, where *exercise* is described as the repetition of actions to improve performance or develop a habit (Fākhir, 1979, p. 20). Jean Piaget, for example, defines it as "repeating the same situation or the same response." All these definitions emphasize the importance of repetition and sustained practice in acquiring any skill, habit, or behavior. Therefore, terms such as *exercise*, *training*, *application*, *practice*, *consistency*, and *drilling* are used interchangeably to indicate the idea of habituation through repeated activities, ultimately helping the learner develop competence or mastery (Sārī, 1990, p. 39).

In the educational (school) context, the term *exercise* is defined in the *Educational Techniques Dictionary (Arabic-English)* as "a type of organized and repetitive learning activity aimed at developing or consolidating a specific skill or aspect of knowledge" (Al-Ṣijfī, 2000, p. 241). It is also referred to as a written or oral assignment given to students as an application of previously taught lessons (Dictionnaire encyclopédique Larousse, 1979).

In French, the term is defined as any organized activity based on a specific methodology aimed at the learner’s assimilation and functional use of linguistic elements (Gatisson, p. 202). Therefore, *exercise* is the

structured training that influences behavior and transforms linguistic rules into established habits, with the goal of improving communication proficiency and accuracy, as well as fostering creative expression.

Structural Exercises: Nature and Objectives

The term *structural exercises* is a relatively recent concept in modern language teaching, particularly in Arabic. This type of exercise emerged in countries across the Atlantic – namely in the United States and Europe. D. Girard suggests that the first appearance of such exercises was in the United States under the name *Pattern Drill*, which later evolved into *Structural Drill* in order to emphasize the strong connection between these linguistic exercises and structural linguistics.

This theory quickly highlighted the need for a more thorough analysis of difficulties and problems, leading to a large body of literature that included these types of exercises. Thus, structural exercises became a prominent feature of modern language teaching, adopted by many educators and linguists worldwide (Girard & Amand, 1972, p. 71). Dr. Abdel Rahman Al-Hajj Saleh clarifies that the term *structuralism* refers to the linguistic approach that studies language as a system and a structure that exists prior to its components and elements (Girard & Amand, 1972, pp. 73-71). Structuralism has played a crucial role in helping learners internalize linguistic rules, focusing on intensive use of language and repetition of structures to reinforce and apply them in various forms (Abdel Rahman, 1997).

These exercises are vital in improving learning outcomes. Teachers use them to address certain educational needs, such as acquiring a specific linguistic structure through its systematic use in a series of sentences, following a model presented at the start of each exercise. Conducting these drills requires active participation from the learner—guided by the teacher—in performing substitution or transformation operations on elements of the initial sentence or response. These operations typically involve only one possible answer, as seen in the following example (Sāri, 1990):

Teacher: The teacher gave the lesson.

Learner: The teacher gave the lesson.

Teacher: Word.

Learner: The teacher gave a valuable word.

Teacher: Lesson.

Learner: The teacher gave a valuable lesson.

Teacher: Speech.

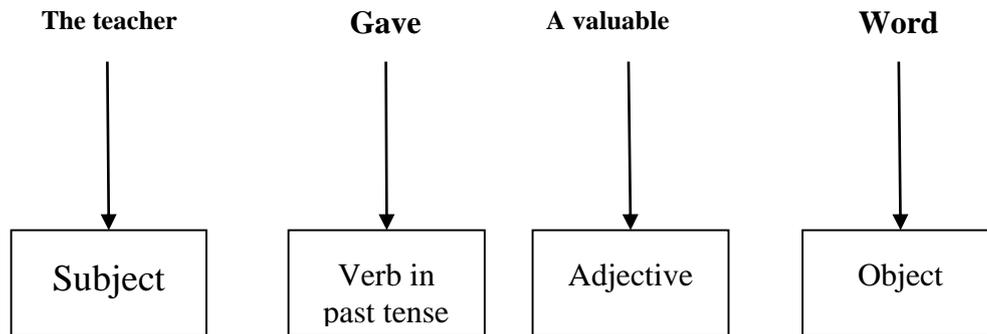
Learner: The teacher gave a valuable speech.

Teacher: Advice.

Learner: The teacher gave valuable advice.

Teacher: Lecture.

Learner: The teacher gave a valuable lecture.



Regarding the concept of *structure* in language teaching, P. Delattre, who is credited with introducing these structural drills, defines them as a series of "slots" controlled by the dynamic structure of the exercise. In the example above, the "starting sentence" (the model) consists of four slots. The dynamic nature of the structural exercise is visible in the substitution process, where the fourth slot is filled with different elements each time.

As for the concept of linguistic structure as applied to language teaching, it is based mainly on the phenomena of linguistic opposition (*opposition*) and similarity (*similitude*). Linguistic similarity allows for the creation of substitution drills, where meanings change within a fixed structure. On the other hand, linguistic opposition facilitates transformation drills, where at least one grammatical function of a slot is altered. This can be seen in the following examples, where the sentence structure is transformed into an exclamatory form:

1. **His happiness is immense.** → *How immense is his happiness!*
2. **His body is strong.** → *How strong is his body!*

Educational Directions for Structural Exercises

Structural exercises are designed with specific educational objectives in mind. Their pedagogical directions are outlined as follows:

A: The rule upon which the structural exercise is based should not be explicitly stated. The rule remains present only within the teacher's control and management of the exercise.

B: The goal is for the student to mechanically acquire the morphological and syntactic structures of the language.

C: The student should be given opportunities to use the structures acquired, with a gradual focus on different structures to enhance their use and mastery during speaking activities.

D: "Students must always be provided with correct sentences to ensure that they do not develop incorrect responses or doubts about the accuracy of their answers" (Madhour, 2006-2007, p. 95; Sāri, 1990).

Characteristics of Structural Exercises

What are the essential characteristics that distinguish structural exercises from other types of language teaching exercises, especially in the context of Arabic language instruction? Structural exercises possess several linguistic, pedagogical, and psychological characteristics that set them apart from traditional exercises. These features are outlined in the following key points:

Structural Characteristic:

This feature emphasizes the close relationship between structural exercises and structural linguistic analysis of the language phenomenon. Determining what aspects of language should be taught requires a description and analysis of the language at all its levels—phonological, syntactical, morphological, and lexical. This linguistic analysis, conducted prior to teaching, helps identify the functional vocabulary that learners need at a specific stage of their education.

Auditory-Oral Characteristic:

Structural exercises are easily applicable in a language lab, and are often referred to as "auditory-oral application of structures." However, to avoid overemphasizing one type of exercise while neglecting others, it is essential to allocate some time to written exercises at all levels, depending on the nature of the learners and their goals in language acquisition.

Organizational Characteristic:

Creating linguistic mechanisms that resemble those acquired in the native language is not a simple task. Acquiring a particular element of language—whether grammatical, morphological, phonetic, or lexical—may require a large number of programmed and purposeful exercises. These exercises are designed according to a carefully structured plan, considering linguistic, psychological, and pedagogical principles. This is a key feature that distinguishes structural exercises.

The organizational nature of these exercises is reflected in the following points:

A: These exercises typically involve organized forms that appear in language teaching for any linguistic element, such as preparation, substitution, and transformation.

B: Completion: Structural exercises often follow a dialog (the "discourse unit") that is both complete in meaning and content. This is what we mean by a *complete discourse*—a text organized according to objective criteria such as selection, planning, sequencing, and progression.

These exercises aim to extend the practice period to solidify the dialogue and the linguistic structures used within it by reusing them in a series of organized exercises. This process integrates into the lesson, and there is further integration at the methodical level, where each exercise builds upon the previous ones.

C: Simplicity and Clarity: Structural exercises are designed to be easy and quick to understand, as in "Listen, listen and repeat," "Transform," etc. The principle of *gradual progression* is evident in these exercises by simplifying language difficulties to the highest degree, breaking them down to ensure that no exercise contains more than one difficulty at a time. As for a set of exercises (a unit), the gradual nature is reflected in the transition from repetitive mechanical drills using simple structures, gradually progressing to exercises involving creativity and open-ended responses. Simplicity also applies to the instructions at the start of the exercise, which are framed as questions.

D: Specialization: Specialization in structural exercises refers to the focused attention given by educators on one specific linguistic topic at a time. A single exercise should not tackle more than one difficulty. For instance, when teaching prepositions (e.g., *from, to, about*), the principle of specialization dictates that each preposition should be introduced in a separate exercise, rather than presenting all of them together in a single drill.

E: Sufficiency and Variety: To cement a particular structure in the learner's mind, multiple exercises are needed that are both sufficient and diverse. This characteristic, as intended by the creators of these drills, involves offering a series of examples and patterns that effectively reinforce the structure, making it easier for the learner to use it when needed. Indeed, modern textbooks often include no fewer than ten different models per lesson, with each model containing at least seven variations.

F: Speed of Execution: This characteristic refers to the specific speed and rhythm of structural exercises. These drills, when recorded on audio tapes, typically consist of a stimulus-response sequence, followed by reinforcement. There are two main models: the first, called a *two-phase exercise*, involves only a stimulus and a response, while the second, called a *three-phase exercise*, includes stimulus, response, and reinforcement. The more complex, *four-phase exercise* includes a stimulus, response, reinforcement, and a second reinforcement phase. It is important to note that these exercises should be conducted at a uniform speed for all learners. For beginners, exercises should be spoken slowly and clearly to help with correct sound and intonation production. For more advanced learners, the exercises can be delivered at a regular pace, as used in everyday speech situations (Sāri, 1990, p. 86).

Types of Structural Exercises (Girard & Amand, 1972)

The forms and names of structural exercises may vary between authors, but the core structure and essence remain the same. Nelson Brooks classifies them into twelve types, Robert Lado into eleven types, Robert Boulitzer into seven types, and William Mackey into eleven types. François Requetat identifies four categories, each containing different types of exercises. As for Arabic-language authors, Dr. Reda Al-Suissi recognizes five types, while Dr. Ali Al-Qasimi lists ten types for beginners and six for advanced learners.

Advantages of Structural Exercises

The importance of structural exercises lies in the numerous and diverse advantages identified by specialists, which include the following (Girard & Amand, 1972):

Effective Alternative to Lengthy Grammatical Explanations:

Structural exercises offer a successful way to replace the long, exhausting grammatical explanations that have burdened both teachers and students in traditional language teaching.

Solving the Problem of Grammar Application:

In structural exercises, the sufficient answer and solution to a common complaint among teachers arise: students often struggle to apply grammatical rules correctly in their speaking and writing, despite memorizing them. These exercises bridge this gap by helping learners internalize the rules through practice.

Facilitating Grammatical Comprehension and Use:

Structural exercises aim to highlight linguistic structures in a way that helps the learner deduce and absorb the rules quickly, using minimal effort. This leads to the natural, accurate, and spontaneous application of these rules.

Fostering Autonomous Learning:

These exercises make learners responsible for acquiring their own language skills, while the teacher acts as a guide, coordinator, and corrector of this well-organized acquisition process.

- Boosting Learner Confidence:** The exercises give learners a sense of achievement in the language they are learning, enhancing their confidence and increasing their motivation to continue learning.

Focus on Spoken Language:

One of the most significant advantages of structural exercises is that they lay the foundation for training learners in the spoken aspect of language. Although they can easily be adapted to written forms, these exercises primarily focus on speaking, which is crucial in modern language teaching.

Criticisms of Structural Exercises

Despite the significant value of these modern structural exercises, which are based on a well-founded linguistic, psychological, and educational theory (Sārī, 1990, p. 110), and despite the positive results achieved in language acquisition, some linguists have criticized them for several reasons, many of which are alleged or misplaced. These criticisms include the following:

Artificial Nature of Linguistic Content:

One criticism is that structural exercises often isolate linguistic structures and sentences from real, natural speech contexts. This makes the content feel artificial, as it may not reflect the complexities or nuances of actual communication.

Overemphasis on Oral Practice at the Expense of Written Language:

It is argued that structural exercises focus too heavily on oral language skills, neglecting the written aspect. While it is true that the modern approach to language teaching emphasizes oral skills, especially in language learning today, it is not correct to say that structural exercises ignore the written aspect. In fact, any teacher can convert structural exercises into writing tasks. However, oral exercises should always come first, followed by writing exercises.

Pigeonholing Structural Exercises as "Parrot-like":

Some critics claim that structural exercises encourage "parrot-like" repetition with little creativity. However, this view is an exaggeration. The so-called "parrot-like" repetition is actually an essential starting point in the learning process, acting as an introductory phase that prepares learners for more complex and creative tasks, such as transformation exercises, conjugation, and question-and-answer drills. These activities foster creativity, as learners are required to generate sentences they have not heard or read before.

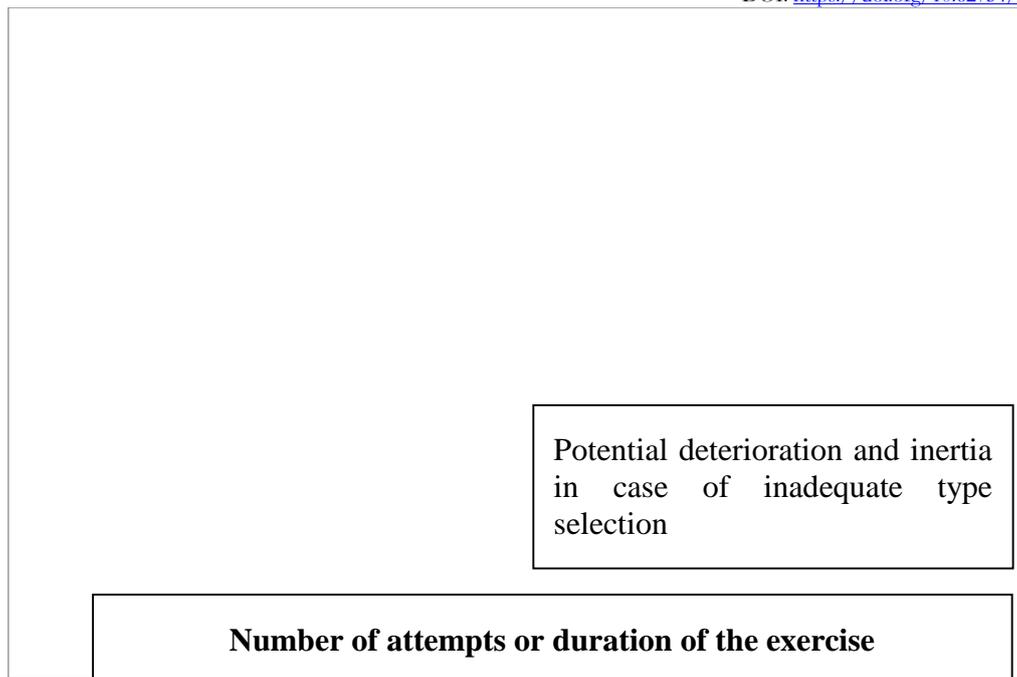
Need for Skilled Teachers:

While it is true that structural exercises require a skilled teacher, this criticism is not unique to these exercises alone. Teaching any language, especially a foreign one, requires an educator who is proficient and well trained in linguistic, psychological, and pedagogical principles. Structural exercises may indeed demand a certain level of teacher expertise, but this is true for any method of language instruction.

Structural exercises are often criticized for being slow or tedious. However, this criticism overlooks the fact that these exercises follow a gradual progression to avoid overwhelming the learner, preventing cognitive overload. Moreover, these exercises are designed to be engaging and stimulating, incorporating various techniques like changing stimuli, repetition, and variation—key psychological factors that capture attention and prevent monotony. Despite this, some argue that structural exercises need to be supplemented with more dynamic and enjoyable activities, such as language games, to further engage the learner. Notably, this type of exercise is rarely included in Arabic language textbooks, which could help alleviate the monotony of traditional drills.

Fatigue in Long Exercises:

Another criticism is based on the field experiences of modern language teaching, which suggest that long exercises often start with rapid improvement but then lead to a phase of stagnation or fatigue. The graph below (Sārī, 1990, p. 114) illustrates this, showing that learner engagement and retention typically decrease over time.



Therefore, incorporating short, enjoyable oral and written language games can serve as an effective break, allowing learners to recharge while continuing to practice in a productive and enjoyable way.

Communicative Exercises:

1. What Are Communicative Exercises and Their Objectives?

The term "communicative exercises" (les exercices de communication) is relatively new in the field of language education, particularly in Arabic language teaching. This type of exercise emerged in recent years as a product of the communicative approach (Khurma & Hajjaj, 1988, pp. 123–192).

The communicative approach itself arose from linguistic, psychological, and social theories, notably influenced by Dell Hymes, a pioneer in sociolinguistics. In one of his lectures, Hymes introduced the concept of "communicative competence," acknowledging Noam Chomsky's notions of linguistic competence and performance but adding the ability to communicate effectively. Hymes explained that a typical child not only learns grammatically correct sentences but also sentences that are appropriate for various social contexts.

Developed as a response to the structural approach, the communicative approach incorporates both the social and communicative dimensions of language learning. Its proponents argued that mastering linguistic structures and constructing grammatically correct sentences has limited value if speakers cannot use the language appropriately in different life contexts. Consequently, research shifted focus from the learner's linguistic needs to their communicative needs (Sari, 1990, p. 120).

Thus, communicative exercises are activities designed to train learners in the spontaneous expression of ideas suited to diverse daily communicative situations (Sari, 1990, p. 121). These include description, reporting, responding, agreeing, refusing, requesting, and other forms of interaction. In essence, any training that teaches a learner what to say, where to say it, how to say it, and to whom, within specific social contexts to achieve a certain goal, constitutes a communicative exercise (Sari, 1990, p. 121).

The primary goal of these modern exercises is not only to safeguard against linguistic errors (lapses in grammar) but also to ensure the correct and contextually appropriate use of language. Put differently, the

aim of communicative exercises is to enable learners to use language spontaneously and accurately in real-life scenarios (Sari, 1990, p. 121).

2. Characteristics of Communicative Exercises:

Communicative exercises possess two main characteristics (Madour, 2006–2007, p. 83):

- a) **Aural-Oral Nature:** These exercises rely on the interaction between participants and elements of the linguistic situation.
- b) **Gradual Presentation of Linguistic Material:** Language is introduced systematically through linguistic functions, emphasizing key functions learners need to master.

3. Key Communicative Linguistic Functions:

The main communicative functions that learners should practice can be summarized as follows, based on Mary Metkshario's classification in her book *Teaching English as a Second Language* (Sari, 1990, p. 125):

- Introduction and acquaintance.
- Classroom-related interactions.
- School-related topics.
- Family discussions.
- Environmental and community-related topics.
- Broader societal interactions.
- Miscellaneous topics.

In the functional-communicative approach, grammar and linguistic functions are taught simultaneously. This can be illustrated as follows:

Beginner Level in the Balanced Approach (Khurma & Hajjaj, 1988, p. 223).

Grammar	Rules	
	Linguistic	Functions

4. Types of Communicative Exercises:

Communicative exercises can be categorized into two main types: guided practice and free expression. These exercises often use a question-and-answer format or broader dialogues involving two or more participants.

Examples of activities under this type of training include:

- Responding to general communicative questions.
- Completing unfinished statements using the student's own words without prompts.
- Engaging in oral discussions on short topics.
- Answering questions about what one would say or do in specific scenarios.
- Free-form conversations.
- General discussions.
- Taking notes.
- Delivering oral and written reports.
- Creative writing, among others.

5. *Advantages of Communicative Exercises:*

The key benefits of communicative exercises in language teaching and learning include the following (Sari, 1990, p. 130):

1. They are indispensable for training learners in spoken aspects of language.
2. They teach learners to express the same idea using varied styles, reflecting the natural diversity of real-life communication.
3. Learners actively engage in these exercises, as they require understanding and producing novel information. Answers or responses are not pre-determined but are created by the learners themselves.
4. Communicative exercises train learners to use language holistically, integrating various linguistic skills and components rather than isolating them.
5. These exercises serve as a key medium for presenting linguistic content, including vocabulary and structures.
6. They motivate learners by focusing their attention on meaningful linguistic communication, even with absent interlocutors.
7. These exercises align with the dynamic nature of real-life communication.
8. For Arabic, communicative exercises provide an effective way to train learners in mastering the unique sentence patterns and rhythms of the language.

6. *Key Criticisms of Communicative Exercises*

While structural exercises alone are insufficient for equipping learners with the skills required for effective communication, are communicative exercises truly capable of fulfilling this role? Can other types of exercises be entirely replaced in the teaching and learning of Arabic, in particular?

Communicative exercises undoubtedly have significant benefits and yield effective results in fostering communicative competence. However, like structural exercises, they are not sufficient on their own. They need to be complemented by other types of exercises. Teaching a language involves teaching an integrated set of skills and linguistic components, which requires a variety of exercises. Each exercise type serves a

specific purpose, is designed for a particular stage, and achieves distinct outcomes within a set timeframe. Therefore, language education must incorporate all exercise types, presented in a complementary and holistic manner.

7. Differences between Structural and Communicative Exercises

The primary distinctions between structural and communicative exercises can be summarized as follows (Sari, 1990, p. 133):

Theoretical Foundations:

Structural exercises are based on structural and behavioral linguistic analysis of language phenomena. Communicative exercises, in contrast, derive their principles from linguistic theories of meaning and communication.

While proponents of structural exercises view the sentence as the fundamental unit of linguistic analysis, advocates of communicative exercises focus on connected speech occurring in specific contexts.

1. Origins:

Structural exercises are a product of the structural approach, whereas communicative exercises stem from the communicative approach.

2. Focus:

Structural exercises emphasize the formal aspects of language, particularly grammar. A learner's performance is deemed correct as long as it aligns with grammatical rules, even if it disregards the social context. On the other hand, communicative exercises focus on functional and practical language use, prioritizing situational appropriateness over formal accuracy.

3. Preparation:

Preparing structural exercises involves identifying the foundational grammar rules for learners to practice. In contrast, communicative exercises require identifying the linguistic functions learners are likely to encounter.

4. Stage of Learning:

Structural exercises are designed for reinforcement, while communicative exercises focus on practical application and adaptation of language skills.

5. Learner Response:

Responses in structural exercises are often restricted and predictable, adhering closely to teacher-provided stimuli. In communicative exercises, however, learners' responses are open-ended and unpredictable, relying on their freedom to construct answers.

6. Goals:

Structural exercises aim to develop linguistic competence, equipping learners with the ability to construct grammatically accurate sentences. However, they often fall short in preparing learners for real-life communication outside the classroom. Communicative exercises, by contrast, aim to foster communicative competence, enabling learners to adapt and interact effectively in social settings beyond the classroom.

7. Role of the Teacher:

Structural exercises allow learners to practice independently, with minimal reliance on the teacher. However, communicative exercises require active teacher involvement as a guide, coordinator, observer, and facilitator.

Conclusion

The key findings drawn from this research are as follows:

One notable observation regarding the current state of Arabic language instruction is that program designers and implementers have yet to fully integrate key linguistic and educational principles. This oversight hinders the improvement of instructional methods and the reinforcement of language acquisition. Additionally, there is widespread ignorance among many learners and educators about the modern techniques recently introduced in language exercises.

Development of Language Exercises in Modern Methods:

Language exercises in modern teaching methods have evolved across two levels:

- **The Formal Level:** Represented by structural exercises.
- **The Content Level:** Represented by communicative exercises.

However, it is worth noting that these exercises receive minimal attention in textbooks designed for Arabic language instruction.

Mismatch between Skills and Exercises:

A significant discrepancy exists between the intended skills and the exercises provided, leading to inefficiencies in achieving language-learning goals.

Lack of Precision in Designing Exercises:

There is a noticeable lack of accuracy and consistency in the preparation and design of language exercises, affecting their effectiveness.

Advantages of Structural Exercises:

Structural exercises are among the most effective techniques for achieving linguistic accuracy without relying on lengthy grammatical explanations. They provide an essential bridge from language acquisition to linguistic analysis and reflection.

Benefits of Communicative Exercises:

Communicative exercises play a pivotal role in addressing linguistic functions, offering a practical and efficient means of developing communicative competence and ensuring the ability to use language appropriately in real-life contexts.

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