Review

Functional grammar in the context of linguistic applications in Turkish language teaching

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In the last century, language researches adopted the scientific method and linguistics became an autonomous discipline. Linguistics is a framework concept that analyzes all languages in the world in various contexts according to its own rules and draws conclusions using the systematic approach. Functional linguistics is a linguistic trend that examines language elements in terms of their functions in communication. Functional grammar aims to define the functional components and meaningful components of language. This study aims to describe a theoretical framework addressing language, linguistics, functional linguistics, and functional grammar with reference to Saussure's distinction of langue and parole, opposition concept, A. Martinet's functional linguistics, and R. Jakobson's definition of language functions. While trying to find whether functional grammar can be used in native language education and to describe the framework of functional grammar, problems of language teaching were also addressed. In this descriptive study; we used examples to explain the functional linguistics approach, which is an important need in language education, and tried to create a theoretical framework .In this study, it is concluded that learning retention can be achieved through perception of language units and individuals can gain basic language skills if they are given a language education that focuses on the communicative function rather than the prescriptive function of language.

Key words: Turkish teaching, linguistics, functional linguistics, native language teaching.

INTRODUCTION

Today, thinking and producing ideas have gained more importance in line with scientific developments. The developing technology has triggered a fast change, and therefore producing and processing ideas have become more important for people. Thinking skills have been included in education programs as target behaviors. Language education as a tool has surpassed other areas in teaching thinking skills to students because linguists describe language as one of the most important elements in producing and communicating ideas. Ünalan (2005) defines language as a symbol used to express ideas. Language is like a mirror that reflects an individual's inner self, and advocates of this opinion state that thoughts

arecreated by words. It is argued that the individual's structure of thought is proportional to the vocabulary of his language, and vocabulary is likened to a hanger where thoughts are hung. In other words, words act like a package to display thoughts, ascribe functions to them, and help them reach the target.

"Since man communicates his emotions and thoughts, which are the products of his intelligence, to the outside world, language and thought are intermingled.... Man can only express the breadth, depth and meaning of his emotions and thoughts through language" (Korkmaz et al., 2007). Language is virtually an abstract tool which is used to create and express an idea, and to learn how to

think. In this context, language and language education become more important. Improving the individual's language competence contributes to improvement of his thinking skills. Being the most important tool for thinking and expressing oneself in his self-realization process, language has been the subject of many researches and various definitions of language have been made until today.

Regarded as an important authority for his studies on language, Chomsky (2009) considers language as a quality that is unique to man and defines it as a unique competence that can produce a complex language structure even with very simple inputs. Again, according to him, language is not only used to express thoughts and to establish communication, but also to serve one's purposes. Sapir (1983) is another researcher who considers language as a property specific to man. He defines language as an order of symbols that are intentionally produced by the individual and as a method independent of the influence of instincts, by which individuals communicate their emotions, thoughts and wishes. The common point of the definitions made by both linguists is that language is a property unique to man.

Language is "a system of codes used by people to encode and communicate information to each other"(Ünalan, 2005). "Language is a natural instrument that allows people to communicate, a unique body of laws, a living organism that lives only by those laws, a system of secret agreements formed at unknown times, a social institution formed by sounds"(Ergin, 2005). Language is a magical phenomenon with too many aspects that we cannot recall instantly, with too many characteristics that appear when assessed from different points of view, and with some secrets which still remain unsolved. Language is a system of audible signs used by people to express their requests. According to these definitions, language as a system has still some secrets unsolved, has its unique laws, and enables communication between people. We can say that the unsolved secrets of language have led to many researches on language, and language education gained more importance in individual education. Language education has been carried out as a grammar education until today. Therefore we need to answer the question "what is grammar and what is linguistics?" "Linguistics emerged as a branch of science very recently. Before that there was what we call "grammar", the area of science that deals with formal structure, sounds and morphological characteristics of language" (Oğuz, 2005). In this context, it would be proper to make a definition of grammar before defining linguistics.

Grammar is defined as "the branch of science that deals with the sounds, forms and sentence structure of a language and defines its rules" (Turkish Language Association [TDK], 2005). Grammar is "the field of study, which aims to identify the rules that create the system

and to explain those rules consistently" (Erdem and Çelik, 2011). In other words, "Grammar is the discipline that studies sounds, sound structures, words, word structures, meanings, sentence structures of a language, and identifies and establishes all the relevant rules and the laws of a language"(Kükey, 2003). As we can infer from these definitions, grammar is a discipline that aims to examine the rules and the functioning of a certain language in a certain framework. Grammar focuses on the characteristics of a certain language and tries to define its rules. Today, when we look at the definitions made by researchers, we see that grammar is defined rather as a discipline that examines a certain language, not as a discipline that examines languages as defined in the past. Grammar is a practical field of study within the scope of linguistics. In this context, linguistics is a more extensive term compared with grammar, and its field of study encompasses the phenomenon of language as a whole, not the functioning and rules of a single language.

With the studies on linguistics in the last century, linguistics has become a scientific branch of study and as a result, many definitions of linguistics have been made: Gemalmaz (1994) defines linguistics as a common name for all disciplines that research, examine and aim to establish the rules of all languages. Another relevant definition was made by Mounin (1974), who said that modern linguistics deals with the structures, functions and developments of natural languages in an explanatory, objective and descriptive manner.

Saussere (1967) defines linguistics as a discipline that deals with all aspects of language as an asset of the humankind without discriminating between any languages, and lists the functions of linguistics under a few titles. According to him, linguistics must search, define and examine the historical process of all existing languages. Again, the purpose of linguistics is to find the powers that affect all languages independently of time and location, and determine the laws that can explain all the phenomena. It may be said that the recognition of linguistics as a scientific discipline has been facilitated by language researches which defined linguistics and established the limits of the discipline. According to him, language must be considered as a whole and this is what linguistics deals with.

Another definition on linguistics was made by Benveniete (1966). In this definition, Benveniste describes linguistics as a field of study that aims to describe the borders of language, examines it thoroughly and converts it into a solid instrument, and states that linguistics must establish unique methods while analyzing language.

Based on these definitions, the common points can be listed as follows:

1. Linguistics does not examine a particular language, but the existing language phenomena.
2. Linguistics aims to draw its own borders and to create

laws based on the phenomena of language which it examines.

3. Linguistics considers topics of study in various aspects.

Linguistics has become a distinct discipline, particularly as a result of studies by Saussure and his successors, which had reflections on researches on language and approaches to language education. The greatest benefit brought by linguistics to language education is the priority attached to language speaking in teaching methods. In contrast to conventional prescriptive grammar, it has mitigated the effects of linguistic prejudices by adopting the concept of language level" (Kıran and Kıran, 2006).

This understanding also brought different approaches into grammar education. In the last century, functional grammar gained importance as a result of linguistic researches. The word "function" is described by TDK (2005) as "a work performed by an object or a person, the capability to perform a work, a duty, a function". In this context, definitions of functional grammar and functional linguistics must be made.

Functional linguistics is defined by Vardar et al. (1998) as "a structural linguistic trend that considers language elements and their relationships in terms of their functions in communication, prioritizes and favors the communicative function in identifying and assessing language phenomena, and makes linguistic descriptions via this concept". The basic rule of functional linguistics in terms of methodology is "to define the position and role of the phenomena in satisfying communication require-ments, and hence, identify its position in the language system".

Rıfat (2000) made a similar definition: "Functional linguistics deals with the elements of a language system and the relationship of these elements in terms of their functions in communication". "Functional linguistics aims to describe languages. Functional description aims to determine the characteristics of a language, and shows what distinguishes a language from others. The commu-nicative significance and the communicative function of language are utilized in the analysis "(Karaağaç, 2007). As can be inferred from these definitions, functional linguistics exhibits the characteristics of a structuralist trend. It gives priority to the communicative function of language. It aims to describe the phenomena of language by its communicative functions.

Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) is recognized as the founder of structuralism in linguistics. It was Saussure who turned language studies to a scientific discipline. Structuralism does not consider language word-by-word as in conventional approaches. It considers language as a system consisting of interrelated elements and draws new conclusions by establishing its own methods (Aksan, 1973).

"Saussure defines language as a body of systems and structures within a certain period of time - the present

time we currently live in – and uses the term *la langue* (language) for this. *Langue* creates the infrastructure of all conversations, agreements and sound-producing capacities in a language" (Malmkjaer, 1991). Functional linguistics is based on this approach.

The first pioneer of functional linguistics is N.S. Trubetzkoy. With him, S. Karsevski and R. Jakobson joined the Prague Linguists Circle and established the principles of functional linguistics. First, they took Saussure's distinction between langue and parole. (Langue is a supra-individual system formed of signs and rules. In this system, there are rules regulating how these signs are used. Langue makes the speaker feel that it is a system of rules and that it is under the influence of the linguistic society. Parole defines the individual side of a language. It is the application of the body of the signs and rules that make up the language by the individuals who speak the language. In other words, it is a unique way in which individuals use the language they speak). They used this distinction to define the concept of phonogram and accepted it as an element of language. Again, on the basis of Saussure's opposition concept, they explained the functionality and distinctive characteristics of the phonogram. Main assumptions of Prague Linguistics school can be listed as follows:

1. Language is a functional system (System: A body of elements that comprise a whole). In other words, it is a language code formed as a result of intentional language activities of man. No language can be understood without considering the system it belongs to. Each element must be considered within the system it belongs to in contrast to other elements.

2. A linguist must consider language by a synchronic and diachronic approach (Synchrony: Means the study of language assuming that language is stable in a certain time irrespective of its historical development. Diachrony: Means the study of language considering its historical changes and development.).

3. Prague Linguistic Circle aimed to establish the typology of the systems of the world languages. In other words, they aimed to reveal the structural characteristics of the world languages.

According to Karaağaç (2007), the founder of functional linguistics is A. Martinet, the French linguist. Functionality was introduced in France by A. Martinet who is recog-nized as the founder of functionalism in the real sense. "Martinet's functionalism assumes that the principle of studying an individual language does not prevent addressing the language in terms of its relations with the society and the concrete situations outside the language" (Vardar, 1979). He studies the elements of a language system and the relations between the elements in terms of their communicative functions. "According to A. Martinet, languages are double-articulated systems and communication tools that regulate the data of human

Table 1. Units of oral communication.

Addresser	→	Emotive
Addressee	→	Conative
Context	→	Referential
Message	→	Poetic
Contact	→	Phatic
Code	→	Metalingual

experiences in a special manner" (Rıfat, 2000). Double articulation is the analysis of a language on "two different planes in various" units. The first articulation can be described as the combination of the smallest meaningful units; and the second articulation can be described as the separation of meaningful units to the smallest meaning-less phonograms.

In other words, in the first articulation level, the system consists of existing "smallest meaningful units". (For example, morphemes and words) This articulation level is called the "grammatical level" in language. The meaningful units in this level are complete signs, each consisting of a signifier and a signified… In the second articulation level, a semiotic code can be divided into the "smallest functional units" that do not have any meaning on their own… These fully differential and structural units are repeatable features in the code. These are not signs in their own right" (Dervişcemaloğlu, 2005).

In other words, A. Martinet's understanding of linguistics is based on the communicative function of language. According to him, a language element can have a meaning in a certain context. In other words, a language unit will have a meaning when it joins a higher language unit. Communication is defined using "Martinet's six-factor model:

1. A Speaker
2. delivers a message (report)
3. to a Listener
4. at a certain location and time (context)
5. using a language known by both (code)
6. without any perception problems (channel) (Huber, 2007).

In functional linguistics, R. Jakobson is also a leading name who suggested that a linguistic element can only be comprehended in a context, and is the founder of "phonology", the branch of science dealing with sounds.

According to him, sounds are covered by the field of study of linguistics with their distinctive properties within the language system. He suggests that there are six major elements in the formation of verbal communication. He lists them as the "addresser, addressee, context, message, contact and code" and studies the functions of language under six topics (Table 1).

1. Emotive function: It is the language function used by the person, who is the addresser in the communication,

while expressing his/her thoughts, emotions, experiences and prejudices.

2. Conative function: It is aimed at the person, who is the addressee in the communication. These are the effects on the addressee caused by written or verbal language units used by the addresser. "Conative function is a function that is used to invoke a reaction by, and a change in the behavior of, the addressee. It is a function that is used to create a reaction in the addressee and to make him perform an action" (Vicdan, 2010).

3. Poetic function (artistic function): This covers the creative and artistic usage of language in the communication process. "When used in a literary function, language is dependent on the arrangement of its producer, both in terms of form and content. Because the producer of the text can use the language freely, he makes use of the polysemy of words" (Vicdan, 2010).

4. Phatic function: This function serves to determine whether the contact is discontinued or not when establishing communication through language. In other words, it is the function used to check the channel.

5. Referential function: It is briefly the informative function of language. In other words, they are plain literary expressions. "The function used to check communication channels is the phatic function" (Vicdan, 2010).

6. Metalingual function: It is the function in which language is described by language. "Metalingual function means to explain a language element with the help of another language element" (Vicdan, 2010).

Above, we provided general information on linguistics and linguists who studied functional linguistics. In addition to these, Üstünova (2002) says that analyzing grammar only on a sentence level is not sufficient in terms of functional linguistics, and that "phrases" must also be taken into account in the "syntax". Advocates of this approach emphasize the following principles.

a. Sentences and language units must be studied along with the wholes with which they have cohesion and cohe-rence. In other words, language elements are meaningful within a whole.

b. Sentences must not be assessed only in terms of their formal characteristics, but also in terms of their deep structure. In other words., a sentence must be studied in terms of its logical units and morphemes.

These statements bring into mind functional grammar, which is presented as a solution to the present teaching problems in language education. Functional grammar which emerged with functional linguistics and started to gain importance in 1970s must also be defined in this context.

LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR

The results of educational researches and statements of

Turkish and literature teachers, who are the practitioners of language education, reveal that there are various problems in language education. Some of the problems are as follows:

1. Language education is particularly test-oriented. This causes students and teachers to see language only in a normative context and leads to rote-learning in language education. The student prefers memorizing the information in the book instead of listening to the teacher and memorizes patterns, and during the exams, he looks for the questions about the patterns he has memorized. Therefore, a language education in the real sense of the word does not take place.

2. Some students have the prejudice that language is abstract and they cannot understand it. This is another factor which affects the interest in language courses negatively.

3. Some students and people think "we already know our language". This understanding is a major problem for both language learning and language development.

4. Language education has a classifying and limiting character. Another major **problem is to** split language units into certain categories and to address language only through those categories.

Unlike what has been taught until now, language is not only a communication tool. Language is not only a live organism or a natural being. Language is a phenomenon, whose existence and development depend on the development and use of a natural language competence in man. Language is a value that emerged and developed as a result of the need of mankind to name and explain the objects and organisms around him. Development of language competence in humans is also a multi-dimensional process. In this process, the main function of language is illocution. A teacher's saying "I elect you chairman" to one of the students in her class is an illocutionary function. Individuals are innately pro-grammed to learn the language. The readiness of the human brain to learn a language is called the language competence. Learning a language using this language competence is called language acquisition. Individuals acquire a language by learning the words, structural rules, functions and usage of the language through language competence. The first step of language-acquisition is the early childhood. This is a critical period for language acquisition, and the foundation of native language acquisition is laid in this period.

Native language is "learned from the mother and the family at the beginning and subsequently through interaction with others, and is absorbed by one's subconscious and forms the strongest ties with the society" (Erdoğan and Gök, 2008). Native language plays a key role in the development of the individual's thinking skills, helping him establish a healthy communication with his society, acquire its culture and transfer it to future generations, prove successful in educational life and in other branches of science, and acquire a second language. Individuals can expand and express their thinking universe to the extent they are proficient in their native languages. Producing ideas is one of the most important characteristics of today's modern societies and is proportional to the level of proficiency in the native language. Native language is a skill that all individuals acquire without realizing it. Every society sets certain objectives in their educational systems to improve this skill. They achieve these objectives through the teaching of their native language. Language education starts from the primary school and continues throughout the whole educational life. The language education is delivered through language courses.

After individuals begin to use their native languages, they gradually come to understand the grammar structure of the language they speak. An individual can have a full command of his/her native language only if he knows the systems of that language. Functional and structural properties that form a language are hidden in its grammatical structure. An individual's proficiency in his native language is proportional to his/her knowledge of the grammatical structure of the language he speaks. Another factor which gains importance in language education is the transfer of the cultural codes of the society (Erdem and Çelik, 2011). Therefore, the importance of grammar education in language acquisition cannot be denied. However, traditional rules have been used until the present to teach language. A language education approach based on rote-learning has been employed to improve language skills, however, rote-learning and prescriptive grammar education proved unsuccessful, as revealed by the researches. One of the reasons for the existence of a language education system which is based on rote-learning is that the educational system is test-oriented. Functional language education must be employed instead of rote-memorization of grammar, and students must be given a language education that encourages them to reach definitions from the rules. In all definitions of language, it is emphasized that language is a system. Taking a part of a system, in other words, of a whole, and trying to explain that part by isolating it from the other parts, will not give us the correct data. If language is a system, all elements of this system must be explained within this system.

Language is a system that comprises parts. Functional grammar takes language as a system. In functional grammar, a language must be considered as a whole from the smallest part to the largest part. In functional grammar, language is not a body of rules. When studying a language, the conditions in which the language is used must also be taken into account. Not only the language's morphemes, but the functions which morphemes gain within the context must be examined. In this context, many definitions of functional grammar have been made.

"Functional grammar is a branch of grammar that

studies the structural units of a language (text, sentence, combined sentences, syntactic groups etc.), their functions and usage rules"(Musaoğlu, 2003).

"*Functional grammar… tries to establish the use, reason of preference, roles of the functional and meaningful components of a language in a certain text… functional grammar examines and focuses on a language. Functional grammar aims to find which roles the functional and meaningful components (sounds, suffixes, words, phrases, sentences, parts of a sentence) of a language perform*" (İşcan, 2007).

"*In linguistics, functionalist approach is described as an approach based on communication, seeking to describe the role and functions of a language in different communication contexts. In this approach, it is researched how language enables people to create meanings in their interactions with each other; however, meanings in a language cannot be determined clearly every time*" *(Ercan and Bakırlı, 2009).*

Upon the examination of these definitions, the following generalizations can be made on functional grammar:

1. Functional grammar is a concrete branch of grammar practiced under linguistics.
2. It deals with all structural units of a language, their usage rules and functions.
3. It researches how individuals create meanings in various communication environments.
In functional grammar, concepts are defined in three different ways:

*1. **Semantic Functions:** Define the roles of referents in a situation defined by the predicate.*
*2. **Syntactic Functions:** Define the point of view in which the event in the expression is presented in relation to the subject and the object.*
*3. **Pragmatic Functions**: Define the knowledge structure in the wider communication media in which the originators are present. (Ercan & Bakırlı, 2009).*
"*The abovementioned criteria are considered in all traditional grammar books but the semantic criterion is more prominent. In functional linguistics, the syntactic criterion is given more importance and semantic criterion covers only the description of a language. In functional linguistics, the syntactic criterion aims to classify and define the categories in language*" *(Vardar, 1979).*

"*Language is a body of systems. There are many elements that have a role in this system. Grammar is what organizes the combination of these elements and allows them to become meaningful units within a system*"*(Erdem and Çelik, 2011).* Grammar education aims to improve the language skills of individuals. In grammar education, rote-learning and prescriptive approaches are methods that are far from improving language

skills of students. In functional grammar, language elements function with the values they gain in a system. Teaching language structures by having students perceive them through the functional grammar approach can be more effective in improving the basic language skills.

In this section of the study, examples must be given to present today's language-teaching approaches that can be used in language education. Behaviorist, cognitivist and structuralist language-teaching approaches are mentioned in language education. Practical education methods employed in these approaches are also described.

This section will canvass some methods that are consistent with the functional grammar approach. In cognitive language-teaching approach, language competence is acquired innately; the human brain functions as a computer which interprets and reflects what it receives from the outside world. Noam Chomsky is the most prominent advocate of this approach. Chomsky asserts that individuals are programmed as a computer to acquire languages; this process is independent from mental development, language learning develops by mental and productive operations, and this process has no relevance to mental development (Mason, 2001). Another advocate of this approach is Krashen, who thinks that acquiring and learning a language are different things. He states that acquiring a native language is an unintentional and indirect process, which generates the fluency of language. He expresses that learning a language is an intentional effort aimed at using a language correctly, depending on high-level mental skills (Rézeau, 2001). The Communicative Approach, a language-teaching method adopted by this approach, seems to be more consistent with the principles of functional language teaching. In the communicative approach, the use of language has priority over rules in language-teaching. Language-learning is an active process in the minds of individuals. Use of materials in the teaching process can reinforce learning (Rodrìguez, 2004).

Language is a communication tool in the cognitive language-teaching approach, which asserts that language skill is an active process that takes place in the mind. The main purpose of language-teaching is to develop teaching methods for basic language skills, by improving communication skills (Güneş, 2011).

Another language-teaching approach that is noteworthy is the Constructivist Approach. "The objective is to bring up individuals who develop language and mental skills, capable of thinking, understanding, researching, questioning, utilizing knowledge, producing new knowledge, and improving themselves in all areas. Education principles and methods have been developed based on the ideas of specialists such as Piaget, Vygotsky, Bruner, etc." (Güneş, 2011). Constructivism also prescribes language teaching methods. One of these methods is the activity approach. In this method, grammar teaching is

performed through activities and individuals learn by performing certain activities in a communication environment. Because this approach is based on Vygotsky's ideas, language performs a social interaction function. There are many methods other than the language-teaching approaches mentioned herein. Taking into account the objectives of language education, appropriate approaches and methods can be established in the light of functional linguistics, and basic language skills of the individuals can be improved.

"The use of language-teaching as a means of providing knowledge must be abandoned, and language teaching must be turned into a process whereby students can use their comprehensive and narrative skills effectively" (Önkaş, 2010). Language-teaching can be based on the functional linguistics approach instead of a transfer of knowledge. Teachers who can apply these approaches in the classroom, and the language-teaching approaches and techniques used by these teachers have become more important in language education. In his study on functional grammar education based on functional linguistics, İşcan (2007 Functional Grammar) discusses the semantic values of morphemes, monemes, phonemes and determines their functions in language. Therefore, the use of methods in language-teaching which are based on the functional aspect of grammar will help us reach healthy and permanent results particularly in Turkish grammar education.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Native language education and grammar education gained importance when it was understood that language is an important factor in developing and expressing mental skills. This study aims to describe the basic premises of functional linguistics which set out to explain concepts such as langue/parole, synchrony/diachrony, signifier/signified, system and code, as defined in "General Linguistics Courses" by F. Saussure, who laid the foundations of structural linguistic theory, and to provide information about functional grammar, which is shaped over these basic premises. Though linguistics that studies languages and the systems that form languages is a very young branch of science, it has a guiding role. This study reveals that functional linguistics which depends on the structural linguistic theory seeks to explain the theory of structuralism and acts as its successor. This can be assessed in two ways: First; structural linguistics created a basis for language researches and its use by functional linguists brought a more scientific aspect to present studies on linguistics. Secondly, the fact that functional linguistics work by the main principles of structuralism can prevent approaching language from different points of view.

In definitions of linguistics, linguistics is a field of study whose subject is language, and functional grammar represents the practice side of this field. While priority is attached to speaking in functional linguistics, the principle is to examine the phenomena of language within a system in order to describe languages, and these language units are assessed in terms of their roles in communication. In functional linguistics which is shaped on the basis of linguistics, three researchers and their ideas are prominent. According to N.S. Trubetzkoy, language is a characteristic specific to man and language is a system of signs. Communication takes place via this system which has unique rules. He emphasizes the social aspect of languages and that a language must be examined synchronically and diachronically.

Another prominent name in functional linguistics is A. Martinet, who thinks that the communicative functions of the elements that comprise the language must be identified. Communicative elements are defined based on the six-factors model of Martinet, who introduced the double articulation concept. For clarity purposes, Martinet suggests that language units must be considered in the context in which they are used. In this context, traditional grammar assumptions are not relevant.

Another person who studied in this field is R. Jakobson who founded phonology and explained the distinctive characteristics of sounds, drew attention to communicative elements and defined the functions of language. These three people have established the basic ideas of functional linguistics. Based on the concepts explained above, various generalizations can be made regarding language-teaching. Since language has a social aspect, "the requirement to use effective learning methods and techniques in language-teaching" can be a reasonable deduction. On the other hand, taking into account the parole element in the langue-parole distinction, individuality and creativity will become more prominent in the use of language. Consequently, creating activities in language-teaching in which the six-factor model can be applied would be consistent with the functional linguistics approach. Using the functions of language in suitable contexts in language-teaching can contribute to language education. Briefly, issues which must be taken into account in language teaching include a democratic classroom environment where the individual can express himself, a communicative context in which all elements function properly, and use of a language which is shaped in line with the objectives.

Functional grammar that adopts the practices of functional linguistics defends a grammar education which is based on the communicative function of language and the analysis of language elements in its own system, instead of a strict, prescriptive grammar education based on rote–memorization. Addressing each language element in its own system may be an important instrument in language education, notably in native language education, compared with the prescriptive grammar education based on rote-learning caused by the exam-oriented education system. In modern language education programs,

development of basic language skills (reading, speaking, writing, listening and grammar) are preferred over memorizing grammar rules. In this sense, the use of functional grammar in the native environment of the language may be evaluated in the context of teaching basic language skills to students and native language teaching, in particular.

Traditionally seen as a body of conventional rules and assumed to improved by repetition, language may in fact have an important function in solving the problems mentioned above if it is considered as an instrument to realize, express, and liberate oneself, to illustrate his thinking universe, and also an instrument which one can manage and re-shape any time. The idea that the use of language and language education actually means to produce something new every moment can motivate students in language education. Moreover, the idea that language is not a body of rules to be memorized and that a functional approach to language will make the individual more successful in the exams can increase individual's interest in language. Instead of having students understand the rules of language; having them understand the functional characteristics of language, in other words, the langue – parole distinction, may be a more effective way to improve their language skills. In native language education, making the individual perceive the grammatical aspects of the language which he uses can make native language education more effective.

The questions 'Which methods and techniques can to be used to teach functional grammar?' and 'How can individuals perceive the abstract principles of language?' must be answered. To render learning more permanent and meaningful in language and in other disciplines, various practices are employed. In recent years, especially in educational sciences, studies on teaching methods and techniques have been performed and as a result, it has been established that individuals who faced various and regular educational stimulants found learning more enjoyable and retained their learning. To the extent targets are consistent with the real life situations or students are able to apply their learning in real life, the willingness of individuals for learning increases. In this context, it is obvious that applying functional grammar approach alongside the currently accepted education methods will make a positive contribution on improvement of language skills. The Cognitive Language Teaching Approach and Constructivist Language Education Approach principles, which are discussed in this study, appear to be consistent with the functional linguistics theories at certain points. One of the most important points is that they accept language as a communication tool and consider various facades of language. In this context, we can say that these two approaches can be used in functional grammar education.

Exams, either good or bad, are tools which are employed almost in every country in the world. If such exams include language questions which are more relevant with the use of language, this may contribute positively to the development of students' language skills. It may be argued that the prescriptive approach in native language education limits the development of thought in individuals. Therefore, instead of the classic grammar practices, language education can focus on the communicative function of language. Another remarkable finding in this study is the absence of a satisfactory study in the field of functional grammar. A review of the literature did not yield any satisfactory information in this respect, except for a few major sources. It is discovered that there is a need for a study about functional grammar and how to implement functional grammar in educational environments. It is interesting that there is no information defining the techniques to be used in functional grammar teaching processes. In other words, which techniques may be used in the classroom environments to apply functional grammar that only exists theoretically remains an important question to be answered. Particularly, researches about the use of functional grammar in educational environments are expected to provide guidance to educators who try to use this approach.

Functional grammar approach may have guiding role for candidate linguists who have recently started their academic careers. Some of these candidates may be asking the following question to themselves: "Language has already been studied, and certain rules established, what can I do further?" Approaching language in terms of functional linguistics will reveal that this perception is wrong, and will open new horizons for researchers. Particularly, if teachers who practice language education have knowledge on functional grammar, and approach language education from a functional viewpoint, it may be useful in teaching native language and basic language skills.

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