

UDC 378.147:811.111

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CURRENT APPROACHES TO TEACHING ENGLISH GRAMMAR TO STUDENTS OF LINGUISTIC AND NON-LINGUISTIC SPECIALISMS AT HIGHER EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS OF UKRAINE

Nowadays there's not any doubt in the necessity of studying foreign languages, English in particular. The basic part of any language is grammar. Learning grammar is considered to be one of the most complicated tasks while mastering a language. The goal of this research is to consider some problems facing students while mastering English grammar, to analyse current approaches to teaching English grammar to students of linguistic and non-linguistic specialisms at higher educational establishments of Ukraine.

In this article some barriers that hinder mastering English grammar by students of linguistic and non-linguistic specialisms at higher educational establishments of Ukraine are considered. It is stated that the main problems are: insufficient initial level of students' language and grammar skills and cognitive competence, lack of self-study experience and motivation to study, psychological discomfort while mastering grammar, very limited time frames for studying grammar, absence of natural language environment.

In this research the application of different approaches and methods of teaching English grammar are studied, their advantages and disadvantages are specified. The explicit approach is presented as the one based on memorising a large number of rules, paradigms, categories, exceptions etc. The implicit approach focuses its attention on the semantic component of speech. Mastering grammar skills is provided by means of reproducing and memorising forms used in speech contexts, grammatical concepts are formed by adapting speech situations to memorized forms. Communicative and cognitive approaches are highlighted as the most efficient ones. Communicative approach presupposes complete systematisation of all components of study. According to this approach any grammatical phenomenon should not be presented in isolation, but within a contextual entity. Cognitive approach presupposes conscious mastering of the language and grammar in particular in certain coherence, from knowledge of rules and instructions to speech skills and abilities.

There's not a single, perfect approach to teaching English grammar to students of linguistic and non-linguistic specialisms, and though a mix of communicative and cognitive approaches is applied to its teaching nowadays, this issue should continue to be researched.

Key words: *English grammar, grammar competence, the explicit approach, the implicit approach, communicative approach, cognitive approach.*

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СУЧАСНІ ПІДХОДИ ДО НАВЧАННЯ ГРАМАТИКИ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ НА ФІЛОЛОГІЧНИХ ТА НЕФІЛОЛОГІЧНИХ СПЕЦІАЛЬНОСТЯХ У ЗАКЛАДАХ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ УКРАЇНИ

В сучасному світі вже ніхто не піддає сумніву необхідність вивчення іноземних мов, англійської зокрема. Одним із головних аспектів навчання будь-якої мови є граматики, яку вважають найскладнішою складовою для опанування. Метою даного дослідження є розгляд певних проблем, що виникають у здобувачів освіти при вивченні граматики англійської мови, аналіз існуючих підходів до викладання граматики англійської мови на філологічних та нефілологічних спеціальностях у закладах вищої освіти в Україні.

У статті розглянуто такі мовні бар'єри у вивченні граматики як: недостатній вихідний рівень мовленнєвих та граматичних навичок та загальної когнітивної компетенції здобувачів освіти, відсутність навичок самостійної роботи та мотивації до навчання, психологічний дискомфорт при вивченні граматики, жорсткі обмеження часу, що відведений на вивчення граматики англійської мови, відсутність мовного середовища.

Дане дослідження розглядає застосування ряду підходів до навчання граматики англійської мови на філологічних та нефілологічних спеціальностях у закладах вищої освіти в Україні, підкреслено їх переваги та недоліки. Експліцитний підхід базується на запам'ятовуванні великої кількості правил, категорій, конструкцій, обмежень та виключень. Імпліцитний підхід зосереджений на семантичній складовій мовлення. Опанування граматичних навичок здійснюється засобами відтворення та запам'ятовування форм, вжитих у мовленнєвих контекстах, формування граматичних уявлень здійснюється шляхом пристосування мовленнєвих ситуацій до форм, що вже закарбовані у пам'яті. Виокремлюються комунікативний та когнітивний підходи, як найефективніші на даний момент. Комунікативний підхід зумовлює повну систематизацію усіх складових навчання. Відповідно до цього підходу жодне граматичне явище не розглядається відокремлено. Його слід вивчати в контекстуальній єдності. Когнітивний підхід передбачає свідоме опанування мови, та граматики зокрема. Матеріал слід розглядати в чіткій послідовності – від правил та формулювань до мовленнєвих навичок та вмінь.

На сьогодні не існує єдиного ідеального підходу до навчання граматики англійської мови на філологічних та нефілологічних спеціальностях у закладах вищої освіти в Україні. Перевага надається суміші комунікативного та когнітивного підходів, але це питання потребує подальших досліджень.

Ключові слова: *граматики англійської мови, граматична компетенція, експліцитний підхід, імпліцитний підхід, комунікативний підхід, когнітивний підхід.*

Nowadays there's not any doubt in the necessity of studying foreign languages, English in particular. We live in the era of globalisation and international cooperation, that's why barrier-free communication is a priority. Foreign language skills contribute greatly to the competitiveness and professional mobility of any specialist. Thus, English should be paid much attention to at all stages of education. The main goal of studying English at higher educational establishments of Ukraine is to improve students' foreign lan-

guage skills which are necessary for further professional communication at the international level, for their research and cognitive activity at the next level of education and also in their every-day life. Knowing English is a must for every educated person in Ukraine. The basic part of any language is grammar. Learning grammar is considered to be one of the most complicated tasks while mastering a language.

Target setting. The goal of this research is to consider some problems facing students while mastering

English grammar, to analyse current approaches to teaching English grammar to students of linguistic and non-linguistic specialisms at higher educational establishments of Ukraine.

Last scientific researches analysis. The issues of teaching English grammar were revealed in the works of many native and foreign scientists. Current approaches to teaching foreign languages were considered by such Ukrainian scientists as S.Yu. Nikolaieva, O.M. Sherstiuk, O.I. Pometun, O.B. Tarnopolskyi. The aspects of teaching English grammar were investigated by such foreign scientists as Jim Scrivener, Jeremy Harmer; some methods of teaching grammar were suggested by Hermann Funk, Michael Koenig and many others. There are many debates on the approaches and the necessity of teaching grammar while studying a foreign language. Some scholars think that it's essential while others consider it to be useless, as native speakers do not study grammar in order to start speaking their language. Most scientists prove the reasonability of teaching grammar as they realise that students who come to language classes are in different situation from children acquiring their first language, or from adults acquiring the language while actually living in a community which speaks the language. Most classroom students are in a hurry: they do not have time to acquire language gradually (Harmer J., 1987: 6).

The article's purpose. In this article we consider some barriers that hinder mastering English grammar by students of linguistic and non-linguistic specialisms at higher educational establishments of Ukraine. We study the application of different approaches and methods of teaching English grammar, their advantages and disadvantages.

Issues to be researched. Taking into consideration the point that there are a lot of arguments on how to teach English grammar to students of higher educational establishments in Ukraine, it's reasonable to study the following issues:

- possible barriers while studying English grammar by students of linguistic and non-linguistic specialisms at higher educational establishments of Ukraine;
- current approaches to teaching English grammar to students of linguistic and non-linguistic specialisms at higher educational establishments of Ukraine, their advantages and disadvantages, and reasonability of their use.

The statement of basic material. Teaching grammar and statements making, identifying grammatical forms in oral and written speech are provided by means of grammar skills development. The most efficient methods and approaches to teaching English grammar are still being debated. Teachers and schol-

ars point out the advantages and disadvantages of each method and approach, thus the issue of teaching English grammar efficiently is to be investigated. While studying a foreign language students are mastering all types of speech activity, such as speaking, listening, reading and writing. The basis of all these activities is grammar as it provides fluency in speaking which is the primary goal of mastering a language.

Very often students can't boast having profound knowledge of English grammar, and admit having problems in mastering it. Let's consider some barriers in developing students' grammar competence. First of all, we can define the low level of language skills of school-leavers. The process of developing a foreign language competence presupposes several years of study. When entering a university, applicants should already have a sufficient level of language and grammar skills, though many first-year students do not have basic knowledge and skills necessary for further development of language competence. Being one of the most difficult aspects of a language, grammar requires a rather high level of students' cognitive competence. In order to trace patterns of the linguistic system organization, students should be able to think logically, systematize and generalize the material, otherwise they don't understand the material, and can't use it in a new context in their speech. As a result, they consider grammar to be boring, tiring and difficult.

One more barrier while mastering grammar is lack of self-study experience, that is one of the most important aspects of educational and cognitive competence. Due to the specifics of the subject itself, students' independent work plays an important role in grammar skills formation. Students ought to be ready to make individual schedules of their educational and cognitive activity, they should be motivated, and strive for self-development, self-education, and self-control. Unfortunately, the majority of students do not have any self-study experience, they aren't able to study the material themselves, find the necessary material, use the references. They are not motivated or interested in this aspect of language learning. Michael West, one of the founders of modern methods of teaching foreign languages highlighted that it's impossible to teach a foreign language, it's possible only to learn it (Tarnopolskyi O.B., 2019: 3).

The problem is much more serious though. Many university students of non-linguistic specialisms have already got a negative experience of language learning before, that's why they don't feel psychologically comfortable at English language classes, they are afraid of making mistakes and feel confused. Such a state prevents them from being relaxed and ready to remember and accept the material that is resulted in the lack of motivation and interest to the subject.

But even if the students are highly motivated and have sufficient level of grammar skills, educational and cognitive competence, have the abilities and desire to self-study and self-development, such as the students of philology departments who have consciously chosen their future career, the desired result in grammar competence formation may not be achieved without all the participants being responsible for it. Artificial language environment cannot provide the proper conditions for creating and consolidating language skills. When learning to speak our mother tongue we start with practising it, but not with grammar rules. When we start learning grammar we speak our mother tongue fluently. Learning a foreign language follows the reverse pattern. Students start with learning the rules and then begin practising them. Absence of natural language environment and boring exercises decrease students' motivation to study and the efficiency of the whole process of study.

There's also the problem of very limited time dedicated to mastering a foreign language at higher educational establishments of Ukraine. Even students of linguistic specialisms feel lack of grammar classes, so very often there's just enough time for the teacher to present the material, but not to practise it.

The other problem is in the initial level of student's language skills. One group of university students can contain the ones with the beginner level and the ones with the advanced level. This problem is more often observed at non-linguistic higher educational establishments where groups are formed on the basis of special knowledge and skills. It's very difficult for the teacher to arrange the activities in such groups efficiently.

It's generally accepted to distinguish two main approaches to teaching grammar – explicit and implicit. Explicit approach presupposes clarifying grammar rules. Implicit approach is characterised by revising and memorising grammatically correct units and structures without learning the rules. The explicit approach to teaching grammar is implemented by two main methods. They are: inductive method, in which the students are offered some language material to analyse, find some grammatical patterns and formulate the rule themselves; and deductive method, in which the teacher presents the grammar rule and then students practise it in communicative tasks. The inductive method of study is more valued from the point of view of students' cognitive development and their self-study skills formation. Educational material which was not provided to students ready-made and selected, but was found, analysed, systematised and researched by students themselves is easier memorised. Inductive method is more time-consuming and labour-intensive for the teachers and students despite

all its advantages. Under the conditions of very strict time-frames for mastering grammar at higher educational establishments of Ukraine it's almost impossible to use only the inductive method.

There are some methodological principles of teaching grammar. One of the most important ones is the principle of coherent studies. According to it grammatical material should be taught in particular succession. Though, this succession can be varied. Grammar competence can be considered as a skill acquired in the process of a complicated social and cognitive activity. Thereby, teaching grammar is integrated into the communicative approach, presupposing that mastering English grammar is reached through solving communicative problems. This approach is considered to be a more efficient one.

Explicit approach is a traditional one. This approach is based on memorising a large number of rules, paradigms, categories, exceptions etc. While using this approach, grammar rules are learnt and adapted to speech situations, students do not work independently. The implicit approach focuses its attention on the semantic component of speech. Mastering grammar skills is provided by means of reproducing and memorising forms used in speech contexts, grammatical concepts are formed by adapting speech situations to memorised forms. Thus, both these approaches are based on just one of the mechanisms available for grammar competence formation. The first one presupposes passive-conscious learning, the second one has the mechanism of subconscious learning in its base. Current methodology considers communicative and cognitive approaches as the most efficient ones. Communicative approach presupposes complete systematisation of all components of study. According to this approach any grammatical phenomenon should not be presented in isolation, but within a contextual entity. In such a way it's easier for students to understand new grammatical samples. Communicative approach does not provide students with ready-to-use knowledge, when students are given all the information about a new phenomenon and present it as an example. Mastering new material in context assumes that students should identify a new grammatical unit and its functions and features themselves. It's also necessary to understand that the process of teaching grammar should not be limited to identifying the parts of speech, or explaining the rules, it ought to be involved in oral speech, listening, reading and writing. When studying a new grammatical phenomenon, it's very important to appeal to students' prior experience, to previously studied grammar material, to compare them. Sometimes it's necessary to relate the new grammatical phenomenon to the similar one in other languages or in students'

mother tongue. Communicative approach to teaching grammar presupposes using interesting tasks with clearly set goals, and motivating students to use this or that grammatical phenomenon in making statements and communicating with their groupmates within the topics of their interests or every-day life. It provides the particular level of authenticity and eliminates the artificial, monotonous, quasi communicative manner of practising new grammatical samples. Communicative tasks require from students to give advice, express personal opinion, comment on the situation offered, predict the events etc. In such a way students feel the necessity and reasonability to use modal verbs, conditional sentences, verb tenses, passive voice etc. in real communicative situations.

Cognitive approach to teaching English grammar helps the teacher to enforce and develop students' cognitive skills, to arrange their independent work and reflexive activities, which help to provide comparative analysis, understanding, memorising, identifying and adequate use of grammatical structures in oral and written speech. Cognitive approach presupposes conscious mastering of the language and grammar in particular in certain coherence, from knowledge of rules and instructions to speech skills and abilities. We should specify, that cognitive approach to teaching English grammar is applied only if the students are active participants of the process of education, but not the objects of teachers' educational activity. Cogni-

tive approach to teaching grammar requires thorough selection of training materials, that will provide the students with large amount of information where the particular phenomenon could be observed, its functions could be identified and investigated. Teachers primary goal is to use the full range of cognitive strategies at classes and to encourage students' reflexive activity.

Currently, very often the mix of the communicative and cognitive approaches is applied to teaching English grammar at higher educational establishments of Ukraine. Three stages can be identified in teaching English grammar to students of linguistic and non-linguistic specialisms. They are: introduction of new material, its training and practising, using it in different types of speech activity.

Conclusion. Summarizing all the above mentioned issues, it's possible to make the conclusion, that grammar is an integral part of any language. It's one of the most difficult aspects of a language, and there are many problems for students to overcome while mastering it. This aspect should be investigated at the same level as the phonetic and vocabulary ones, as grammar is involved in all types of speech activity: reading, listening, writing and speaking. There's not a single, perfect approach to teaching English grammar to students of linguistic and non-linguistic specialisms, and though a mix of communicative and cognitive approaches is applied to its teaching nowadays, this issue should continue to be researched.

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