

COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH IN GRAMMAR TEACHING КОМУНІКАТИВНИЙ ПІДХІД У ВИКЛАДАННІ ГРАМАТИКИ

This article examines the use of a communicative approach to teaching the grammar of a foreign language. The possibility of creating and simulating real situations using examples of a specific grammar or grammatical topic is described. By creating and developing such situations, students already intuitively use examples with new grammar, and then have the opportunity to independently create rules for themselves regarding this grammatical topic. Different types of information perception are considered. The communicative approach in teaching grammar gives students the opportunity to form grammatical rules according to their type of information perception. On the other hand, the teacher must understand, be able to evaluate and define the group with which they should work. Using a communicative approach and teaching grammar allows the teacher to present grammatical material in various ways, which improves the perception of such information by students. Moreover, having determined the dominant type of information perception by the group, the teacher can develop useful tasks that students will perform using a communicative approach. This, in turn, leads to the fact that the student himself creates rules for himself (or even does not create them at all) on this grammar topic with those resources, images and methods that are most characteristic of this student. In addition, the work considers digital tools in foreign language grammar teaching using a communicative approach. The given list of tools mentioned by students during the survey enables the teacher to develop a learning strategy, prepare and implement tasks and plan a lesson. Various online platforms allow the teacher to choose or develop tasks according to a certain grammar topic, which will fully meet the students needs of a certain group. In addition, such tasks can be adapted and modified according to the group of students.

Key words: *communicative approach, teaching grammar, audios, visuals, types of information perception.*

В даній статті розглядається використання комунікативного підходу викладанні граматики іноземної мови. Описується можливість створення та моделювання

реальних ситуацій з використанням прикладів з використанням певної граматики чи граматичної теми. Створюючи та розвиваючи такі ситуації студенти вже інтуїтивно використовують приклади з новою грамацією, а потім мають можливість самостійно створити для себе правила стосовно даної граматичної теми. Розглядаються різні види сприйняття інформації. Комунікативний підхід у викладанні граматики дає студентам можливість формувати граматичні правила відповідно до їх типу сприйняття інформації. З іншого боку, викладач має розуміти, вміти оцінити та визначити тим групи, з котрою йому працювати. Використання комунікативного підходу і викладанні граматики дає змогу викладачу подавати граматичний матеріал різними способами, що покращує сприйняття такої інформації студентами. Більш того, визначивши домінуючий вид сприйняття інформації групою, викладач може розробити корисні завдання, котрі студенти будуть виконувати, використовуючи комунікативний підхід. Це в свою чергу призводить до того, що студент сам створює для себе правила (або навіть не створює його взагалі) з даної граматичної теми тими ресурсами, образами та методами, котрі є найбільш притаманні саме цьому студенту. Крім того, в роботі розглядаються цифрові інструменти при викладанні граматики іноземної мови з використанням комунікативного підходу. Наведений перелік інструментів, згаданих студентами при проходженні анкетування дає змогу викладачу розробляти стратегію навчання, готувати та впроваджувати завдання та планувати урок. Різноманітні онлайн платформи дають можливість викладачу підібрати або розробити завдання відповідно до певної граматичної теми, коті будуть повністю відповідати потребам студентів певної групи. Крім того, такі завдання можна адаптувати та змінювати відповідно до групи студентів.

Ключові слова: *комунікативний підхід, викладання граматики, аудіо, візуалі, види сприйняття інформації.*

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Knowledge of a foreign language nowadays becomes part and parcel of any sphere of activity including business, industry, culture, etc. Any type of business involves some kind of communication at different levels of its activity. To develop business at the international level or scale company needs foreign speaking representatives. The main requirement to any employee is professional or “hard” skill, on the other hand, knowledge of foreign language is an urgent one of “soft” skills.

As Thomas Masaryk said: “The more languages you know, the more you are human”. Firstly, nowadays knowledge of only one foreign language is not the limit for professional of any sphere of activity, but the English one is still vital. International companies

with their headquarters in many countries need local representatives with the ability to communicate with the workers of the company.

Language, especially foreign language, helps people to find solutions to most difficult tasks because foreign language opens a window of opportunities, it strengthens, magnifies, intensifies, reinforces and amplifies person’s critical thinking. Moreover, knowledge of any foreign language helps us finding problems solutions with a bigger variety of options to do it because we can form our solution in different verbal forms.

A lot of industrial companies have their plants and factories in other countries, hence the communication is bilingual and local workers must be able to make

connection between foreign managers and local workers. In such cases, most of the documentation is in English, moreover, negotiations and management are in English either.

The knowledge of the foreign language gives opportunity to develop, to make progress and to put into someone's future or future of the company. It makes possible to work with primary sources to find current information about innovations in any sphere of activity, to attend international conferences and to exchange the experience, to make tough business connections, etc.

ESP (English for specific purposes) needs the special terminology and it must be taught on the basis of general English. The grammar for ESP is the same, but there are some specific features inherent to formal language or scientific one. Hence, to learn grammar for ESP it requires acquaintance with general grammar and here the main concept is on the formal style and particular features of it. Grammar is rather important here because it differs little in ESP, it has and represents the formal style where particular grammar "style" rules work. Teaching grammar is about rules which must be explained and given to students in the most appropriate ways. Here appropriateness depends on a huge number of aspects. First of all, it is the grammar topic itself – it can be simple or difficult. Secondly, it depends on students or group's level of foreign language competence. Thirdly, it depends on the perception way of the majority of the group, etc.

Grammar is the most difficult part of language learning since students need to learn rules, exclusions (there are more exclusions than rules in English language), understand the rules and use them correctly in foreign language. To present any business at international level it's better to do it with "correct" language, hence fluent English sounds much better and compels more trust to presenter and business.

Grammar and vocabulary are two vital parts of any language. And they can't exist without each other. It is impossible to speak fluently using only nouns or only verbs, for instance, on the other hand, we can't make grammatically correct sentence (with subject, predicate, etc) without words. We need grammar to construct sentence with words (vocabulary) and we need vocabulary to get up grammatically correct sentence.

The success of grammar teaching depends on a set of different options. First and the most influential factor is recipients' age. The same grammar topic cannot be explained or taught in the same way for differently aged people. Comparing children or kids to adults – the way of presenting information, especially grammatical information, differs.

The next important factor in grammar teaching is the way of perceiving information. There are three main types of information perception – visuals, auditory, kinesthetic. Of course, all people are different

and it's hardly possible to put visuals and kinethetics into different classes to study. Grammar teaching for visuals comprises a lot of pictured or even filmed information. Presentation slides are perfect to explain grammar to visuals. It's not so important for them to listen or hear the explanation of grammar rule, but to look at it with the examples either. It is important not to except the age factor, because visual explanation for children and adults is different. In most cases adults get pleasure by getting "kids" visual explanations, but pictures, photos or videos for adults are not always appropriate for children due to some political, economical, religious or any other factors in the video.

Audial grammar teaching is based on the audio signals. There are signal words which help students perceive, understand, memorize and practice grammar in the most appropriate and successful way. For those students the sound is much more important than the picture. They do not need in most cases visual support, oral explanation is more important for them than any visuals.

Kinethetics grammar teaching is the most complicated type for teacher, otherwise it combines the previous types and varies the ways of presenting grammar. Realia is perfect in such grammar activities for students to understand, "feel" and use the grammar.

There is one more perception type – digital, "Digital people perceive the world around them with the help of logical thinking, numbers and signs. Only 5% of the population are of this type. These are very peculiar people who care about the meaning, functionality and significance of all information". [1]

And one more, "extra" type – discrete are people with a special type of thinking. Such people are quite rare, so they do not fit into the general theory. Discretes think in terms of utility and functionality. They evaluate the world in terms of meaning. In fact, the previous three types of people experience through words, and in the discrete case, words are the experience. They take all information literally, without thinking about what might be behind it". [2]

There is no man in the world with definite perception, and in most cases all of them are presented in people's minds, but one of them is dominant and the most convenient for person. Hence, teacher should test, value, estimate the whole group to understand which way of presenting grammar is the most appropriate for this or that group.

Here we should refer to Bloom's taxonomy which was discovered in 1956 by group of scientists. "published a framework for categorizing educational goals: Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. Familiarly known as Bloom's Taxonomy, this framework has been applied by generations of K-12 teachers and college instructors in their teaching.

The framework elaborated by Bloom and his collaborators consisted of six major categories:

Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation. The categories after Knowledge were presented as “skills and abilities,” with the understanding that knowledge was the necessary precondition for putting these skills and abilities into practice.

While each category contained subcategories, all lying along a continuum from simple to complex and concrete to abstract, the taxonomy is popularly remembered according to the six main categories”.[3]

Using Bloom’s Taxonomy in grammar teaching helps teacher to categorize, simplify and explain the grammar material in the easiest and the most appropriate way. The first stage “remember” is perfect for grammar teaching. Anyway, even when we use communicative approach or some other techniques – students need some background to use for understanding the rule and the corresponding information. Next stage is “understand” – it’s one of the most important elements in grammar teaching. If student just learn the grammar rule by heart without its complete understanding it will not bring any sense or success. The next step after understanding the grammar rule is its corresponding use, students need to apply the obtained material in the correct way, situation and context. The next category in Bloom’s Taxonomy is “analyze” – hence, students should understand and make conscientious choice of grammar rule and material. To do it, students must analyze the context, conditions and situation then they evaluate the available material and create the sentence in the correct grammar way.

“Here are the authors’ brief explanations of these main categories in from the appendix of Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Handbook One, pp. 201-207):

– **Knowledge** “involves the recall of specifics and universals, the recall of methods and processes, or the recall of a pattern, structure, or setting.”

– **Comprehension** “refers to a type of understanding or apprehension such that the individual knows what is being communicated and can make use of the material or idea being communicated without necessarily relating it to other material or seeing its fullest implications.”

– **Application** refers to the “use of abstractions in particular and concrete situations.”

– **Analysis** represents the “breakdown of a communication into its constituent elements or parts such that the relative hierarchy of ideas is made clear and/or the relations between ideas expressed are made explicit.”

– **Synthesis** involves the “putting together of elements and parts so as to form a whole.”

– **Evaluation** engenders “judgments about the value of material and methods for given purposes.”[3]

Communicative approach in grammar teaching is mostly applicable and serviceability for students with

audial perception of information, but visual support is either very important. For grammar teaching teacher choose the strategy, methods and techniques. To analyze the possibility, correctness and reliability of communicative approach use in grammar teaching there has been conducted a questionnaire.

The total number of participants is one hundred and twenty three students. The faculties and institutes are – E.O. Paton Institute of Materials’ Science and Welding (seventy eight students), Instrumentation Engineering Faculty (thirty six students) and Faculty of Physics and Mathematics (nine students). There are thirty students of the first course of bachelor degree, thirty two students of the second course of bachelor degree, nineteen students of the third course of bachelor degree, twenty nine students of the fourth course of bachelor degree and thirteen students of the first course of master degree.

The questions are all about grammar teaching with communicative approach – to understand and evaluate students’ preferences on available items during the studying. The first question “Do you find it easy to learn grammar?” devotes to the general understanding of the situation in a group, course, etc. Forty four students (thirty six percent) gave the affirmative reply – grammar is not a problem for them in studying English in University. On the other hand, seventy nine students (sixty four percent) gave the negative answer and replied that grammar is not an easy task for them.

And the following question “Do you need to study grammar at university?” gives interesting reply and shows the importance of grammar teaching in University. So, the option “No, we have already learned it at school” was chosen by fourteen students (about eleven percent), two other options – “Yes, we have to study” and “Yes, it is worth considering certain grammar topics and complex topics” counted almost the same results. Fifty four students for “Yes, we have to study” (it’s about forty four percent) and fifty five students for “Yes, it is worth considering certain grammar topics and complex topics” (it’s about forty five percent). This question shows students’ understanding that they need to work with grammar during the foreign language studying at the university.

Next question collects the information about students’ preferences in grammar learning, moreover, it helps teacher to identify students (group, generally) as visuals, audials, etc. “Choose the most productive type of grammar study for you (you can choose several options)” has presented such replies: “perform practical tasks on a certain grammatical topic and, as a result, understand a grammatical rule” took the biggest amount – eighty six students have chosen it. “listen to the teacher explanation” – eight one students (sixty six percent), then goes “watch the video on YouTube in English” – sixty three students (about a half), “read the rules in the textbook” was chosen

by thirty nine students (thirty two percent), “learn the rule by heart and do the exercises” – twenty seven students and “watch the video on YouTube In Ukrainian” – five students (four percent). This option reflects the ability and readiness of students to perceive the information, even grammatical one in English and modern generation work more with visual support – it doesn't mean that all of them are visuals it just shows the availability of different video support (for instance, grammatical YouTube channels).

“Which of the types of presentation the grammatical material do you think is more effective” has the options with the communicative approach and the results are rather productive. “Explanation of the rules by the teacher and then fixing the rules, by performing grammar exercises” amounts seventy percent of the asked students. The next productive way to study grammar for students is “teachers explanation”, it is the classical way of grammar studying and it's widely used in schools. Then goes “watching You Tube video in English”, “read rules in a textbook”, “learn the rules by heart and do some grammar tasks”. Either “watching

You Tube video in Ukrainian (native language)” was mentioned by students. To sum up this question – today's generation prefer more digital and interactive way of studying, even grammar topics.

To analyze the students' readiness to use communicative approach in grammar studying, the following question was considered – “Which of the types of presentation of grammatical material do you think is more effective”. Seventy two (out of a hundred and thirty two) students has chosen option “explanation of the rules by the teacher and then fixing the rules, performing grammar exercises”, nineteen students pay attention at option with communicative approach – “doing grammar exercises and then analysis of the rules” and one more communicative option – “performance of communicative exercises with with an emphasis on certain grammatical aspects” became the choice of thirty two students. This question gives an opportunity to evaluate the situation in a group and the possibility to use the communicative approach in grammar teaching in this or that group.

Should the teacher, after explaining the grammatical material, give consolidation exercises with checking and explaining errors or difficult cases? One hundred and twelve students (ninety one percent) answered “yes” and only eleven students (nine percent) answered “no”. Students always need support any any explanation of grammar or other new material.

Next question “Which option for consolidating new grammatical material do you think is more effective?” considers different ways of grammar teaching. “Exercises developed taking into account the possibilities of using certain grammatical material in situations close to real conditions” was the choice of forty six

students (about thirty eight percent) and “exercises from grammar textbooks (they perfectly designed and tested material)” was chosen by fourteen students (almost twelve percent). Fifty percent agreed with both options. It brings us to the conclusion that students are ready to work with new grammar materials without theoretical support and make their own conclusions and rules afterwards.

Interactive activities are perfect for communicative approach in grammar teaching. Students are able to model and simulate real situations, moreover all types of activities can be involved (for visuals, audials, etc). And the answer for the question “Do interactive resources help in learning English grammar?” was unanimously positive (ninety nine percent).

To identify visuals and audials we can use the following question. “When studying a new grammar topic, which type of presentation of the material is most convenient for you?” Most of the students – fifty nine have chosen option “video material”, fifty six students have chosen “printed textbook”, seven students – audio materials and if we consider all these students as an academic group it is possible to notify such group as mostly “visuals” and prepare all the grammar materials with visual effects or support.

Since all the material is mostly given in digital form it is better to realize which platform or tool is better to use. “Which of the resources is the most convenient for learning grammar (training and consolidation)” most of the students mentioned classtime.com – sixty seven students (fifty five percent), google class and kahoot were mentioned each by sixteen students, then nearpod, learning.apps were mentioned. Moreover, students commented such sources as: “Various quizzes of the type of matching words with their meaning. And frequent use of them in scientific videos” and “these resources have slightly different functionality and can be used in different ways. For example, classtime is more convenient for homework, and kahoot is more interesting to use directly during pairs”.

Students work with different online sources and tools and help teacher to analyze the possibilities of each online tool, to adapt tasks according to the platform requirements and students' needs. Using digital tools and online resources gives teacher opportunity to teach grammar without teaching. Teacher creates such tasks and ideas that students finally create their own grammar rules. The idea is not to create new rule or new grammar, but to make it in the most appropriate way for student.

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