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#### **MAJOR APPROACHES TO FORMATION OF STUDENTS' GRAMMAR COMPETENCY AT HIGHER EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS: FOREIGN EXPERIENCE**

***Анотація.** Визначено основні підходи до формування граматичної компетенції студентів вищих навчальних закладів. Проаналізовано особливості застосування ефективних методик навчання граматики англійської мови у вищих навчальних закладах. Охарактеризовано прямий, граматично-перекладний та аудіо-лінгвальний методи викладання граматики англійської мови. Виявлено переваги та недоліки використання кожного з наведених методів у контексті формування іншомовної компетентності студентів. Обґрунтовано доцільність використання ігор при навчанні студентів граматики англійської мови. Узагальнено досвід практичної роботи з дидактичними іграми. Окреслено основні новітні підходи до викладання граматики у вищих навчальних закладах зарубіжних країн, які можуть бути використані у вітчизняних навчальних закладах.*

**Ключові слова:** прямий метод, граматично-перекладний метод, аудіо-лінгвальний метод, дидактична гра.

*Постановка проблеми у загальному вигляді.* Nowadays different changes and reforms are being made in the system of higher education in Ukraine. New demands are put forward for a specialist with higher education by modern society. A specialist should be a highly qualified and creative personality with independent and critical way of thinking. The strategic task of modern higher education is to focus on providing the best opportunities for students, to reveal and implement their talents and abilities on encouraging them for life-long learning and to acquire knowledge. The problem of modernization of teaching attracts a lot of attention because of the pragmatic needs of the modern world; desire to acquire necessary skills and competence in communication, increasing speed of professional and everyday life as well as globalization processes.

No one knows exactly how people learn languages although a great deal of research has been done into the subject. Many methods have been proposed for the teaching of foreign language. And they have met with varying degrees of success and failure. It should be noted that methods of foreign language teaching have varied for years. But still, there is no exact approach how English grammar should be taught at the higher educational establishments.

*Аналіз останніх досліджень і публікацій.* Methods of foreign language learning and teaching are in the focus of attention of many contemporary researchers and practising teachers, among them are: P. Galperin, I. Isayev, A. Kirsanov, T. Kornilova, A. Leontyev, I. Yakimanskaya and others (the principal theoretical concepts of foreign language teaching); V. Buhbinder, N. Gez., M. Lahovytsky, A. Myroliubov, S. Nikolayeva, V. Skalkin, N. Skliarenko, O. Vyshnevsky (methodology of foreign language teaching); V. Boumová,



G. Broughton, K.T. Henson, D. Nunan, J.C. Richards, J. Scrivener, R.W. Tyler, M. West, R.V. White, D. Zemenová (innovative methods of foreign language learning and teaching). To achieve the aim we used such methods of research as analysis, synthesis, descriptive and comparative analyses.

*Формулювання мети статті.* To summarize the latest achievements in the sphere of modern teaching methods of English as well as to consider contemporary approaches in teaching English grammar at the higher educational establishments.

*Вклад основного матеріалу дослідження.* The grammatical systems of Ukrainian and English are fundamentally different. English is an analytical language, in which grammatical meaning is largely expressed through the use of additional words and by changes in word order. Ukrainian is a synthetic language, in which the majority of grammatical forms are created through changes in the structure of words, by means of a developed system of prefixes, suffixes and ending [2, p. 89].

A number of different approaches of foreign language learning and teaching have been suggested by different scholars. The main approaches used for teaching grammar are grammar-translation, audiolingualism, and direct method [7; 1; 11; 9]. We shall examine these methods and pay attention to the teaching grammar of the foreign language at the higher educational establishments.

The goal of grammar-translation method is to produce students who can read and write in the target language by teaching them rules and applications with little attempt to communicate orally in the target language. According to J. C. Richards, this approach was based on the belief that grammar could be learned through direct instruction and through a methodology that made much use of repetitive practice and drilling [7, p. 90]. He describes this method in more detail when he declares that this approach to the teaching of grammar was a deductive one: students are presented with grammar rules and then given opportunities to practice using them. As we can see from these statements, in language lessons, the priorities were (and still are) grammar, grammatical rules, given examples, and translating from English into the mother tongue and vice versa.

The analysis of the scientific sources [7; 9; 11] shows that major characteristics of grammar-translation method are the following: classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little active use of the target language; much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words; long elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given; grammar provides the rules for putting words together, and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of word, reading of difficult classical texts is begun early, little attention is paid to the content of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis.

The grammar-translation method is largely discredited today. With greater interest in modern languages for communication the inadequacy of grammar translation methods became evident.

Audiolingualism, developed to enhance grammar-translation, focused on listening and speaking skills in precedence over reading and writing skills with a lot of attention paid on correct pronunciation but lacking the use of creative language. The audiolingual method was the method developed in the Intensive Language Program. It was successful because of high motivation, intensive practice, small classes, and good models, in addition to linguistically sophisticated descriptions of the foreign language and its grammar.

Grammar is taught essentially as follows: some basic sentences are memorized by imitation. Their meaning is given in normal explanation in the native language, and the students are not expected to translate word for word. When the basic sentences have been



overlearned (completely memorized so that the student can rattle them off without effort), the student reads fairly extensive descriptive grammar statements in his native language, with examples in the target language and native language equivalents. He then listens to further conversational sentences for practice in listening. Finally, practices the dialogues using the basic sentences and combinations of their parts. When he can, he varies the dialogues within the material he has already learned.

The characteristics of audiolingual method may be summed up in the following list: new material is presented in dialog form; there is dependence on memorization of set phrases and overlearning; there is a little or no grammatical explanation: grammar is taught by inductive analogy rather than deductive explanation, vocabulary is strictly limited and learned in context; great importance is attached to pronunciation, very little use of the mother tongue by teachers is permitted; successful responses are immediately reinforced; there is a tendency to manipulate language and disregard content [5, p. 260–262].

The direct method appeared as a reaction against the grammar-translation method. There was a movement in Europe that emphasized language learning by direct contact with the foreign language in meaningful situations. This movement resulted in various individual methods with various names, such as new method, natural method, and even oral method, but they can all be referred to as direct methods or the direct method. The direct method known today as «Berlitz» makes an effort to immerse students in the target language through teacher's monologues, formal questions and answers and direct repetition in the input [6, p. 13].

The direct method assumed that learning a foreign language is the same as learning the mother tongue, that is, that exposing the student directly to the foreign language impresses it perfectly upon his mind. This is true only up to a point, since the psychology of learning a second language differs from that of learning the first. The child is forced to learn the first language because he has no other effective way to express his wants. In learning a second language this compulsion is largely missing, since the student knows that he can communicate through his native language when necessary.

In practice direct method stood for the following principles and procedures: classroom instruction was conducted exclusively in the target language; only everyday vocabulary and sentences were taught; oral communication skills were built up in a carefully graded progression organized around question-and-answer exchanges between teachers and student in small, intensive classes; grammar was taught inductively, i.e. the learner may discover the rules of grammar for himself after he has become acquainted with many examples; correct pronunciation and grammar were emphasized [11, p. 88].

Unlike the traditional methods, now learning grammar presupposes involving the students to a greater extent. Teachers should observe four conditions for a good grammar presentation: creation of a safe atmosphere and feeling that the tasks are achievable, showing understanding, active listening, reading, speaking and writing, teaching the meaning before the form. J. C. Scrivener also states, «Keep it short» [9, p. 127]. Observing this rule is essential because long explanations often become confusing and boring. Two important approaches in teaching grammar are elicitation and personalization. Personalization means using personal information and data, elicitation presupposes active participation into the lesson. Checking understanding can be provided by asking concept questions (which need «yes» or «no» answers). To facilitate the classroom activities teachers can also use examples, visual aids or language games.



Introducing games into English classes can become an integral part of teaching grammar [8, p. 32]. Well-chosen games are invaluable as they give students a break and at the same time allow students to practice language skills. Games are highly motivating since they are amusing and at the same time challenging. Furthermore, they employ meaningful and useful language in real contexts. They also encourage and increase cooperation. The variety and intensity that games offer may lower anxiety [6, p. 14] and encourage shyer learners to take part, especially when games are played in small groups.

Games in teaching English provide a context for meaningful communication. Even if the game involves discrete language items, such as a spelling game, meaningful communication takes place as students seek to understand how to play the game and as they communicate about the game: before, during, and after the game.

This meaningful communication provides the basis for comprehensible input [3, p. 232], i.e., what students understand as they listen and read, interaction to enhance comprehensibility, e.g., asking for repetition or giving examples [5, p. 272], and comprehensible output, speaking and writing so that others can understand [10, p. 160–162].

Besides, games can involve all the basic language skills, i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and a number of skills are often involved in the same game [4, p. 76]. It is necessary to mention that games can be used for all levels of learning. By regarding the proficiency, age and experience of the learners, appropriate activities might be applied successfully. It is also important to design clear and easy directions for the games or the activities [12, p. 23].

From our own teaching experience we also propose to play stimulating games which are intended at developing students' memory, imagination, verbal reaction, and communicative potential. For these purposes we apply different types of language-based games which can also serve such additional purposes as relaxation, facilitation and incentive. Stimulating games can be applied in various types of classes, starting with oral practice and ending with specialized courses like practice of translation. They need not more than 20 min. In the mid- or at the end of the class and demand minimum preparation. We usually practice a block of stimulating games which include the following activities: short synopsis, imagery memory, emotional memory, visual memory, make it shorter, construct a catch phrase, make out a lead, create a headline, have understood – explain to the other, checkpoint, theme and variations, how it was?

*Висновки результатів дослідження.* We shall briefly review the treatment of grammatical explanations by some of the major methods. This is not meant to be an exhaustive study of all available methods; rather it is an attempt to show the variety of ways in which different methods deal with grammar explanations and may help teachers in evaluating available materials as teaching grammar in a modern way is an essential part in teaching language.

Since teaching is a developing art, which requires innovative and creative ideas to enrich its effectiveness, we are recommended to use such resource as games in our classrooms. Games can assist our teaching of grammar while providing a relaxed atmosphere and motivated students. Such activities are student centered, hence, by using them we give a chance to our students to express themselves, enjoy themselves during learning, and use the reserves of their minds. Games let our students use their long-term memory and learn effectively. So there is an undeniable fact that if our concern is to provide a successful and beneficial teaching, we should try to integrate games which bring the structural, pragmatic and communicative aspects of language together in our language classrooms.



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### ОСНОВНЫЕ ПОДХОДЫ К ФОРМИРОВАНИЮ ГРАММАТИЧЕСКОЙ КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ СТУДЕНТОВ ВЫСШИХ УЧЕБНЫХ ЗАВЕДЕНИЙ: ЗАРУБЕЖНЫЙ ОПЫТ

*Аннотация.* Определены основные подходы к формированию грамматической компетенции студентов высших учебных заведений. Проанализированы особенности применения эффективных методик обучения грамматики английского языка в высших учебных заведениях. Охарактеризованы прямой, грамматико-переводной и аудио-лингвальный методы преподавания грамматики английского языка. Обнаружены преимущества и недостатки использования каждого из приведенных методов в контексте формирования иноязычной компетентности студентов. Обоснована целесообразность использования игр при обучении студентов грамматики английского языка. Обобщен опыт практической работы с дидактическими играми. Определены основные инновационные подходы к преподаванию грамматики в высших учебных



заведениях зарубежных стран, которые могут быть использованы в отечественных учебных заведениях.

**Ключевые слова:** прямой метод, грамматико-переводный метод, аудиолингвальный метод, дидактическая игра.

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**MAJOR APPROACHES TO FORMATION OF STUDENTS' GRAMMAR  
COMPETENCY AT HIGHER EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS:  
FOREIGN EXPERIENCE**

***Abstract.** Many methods have been proposed for teaching foreign languages. They have proved to be successful and unsuccessful to varying degrees. The latest achievements in the sphere of modern teaching methods of English have been summarized and contemporary approaches in teaching English grammar at higher educational establishments have been considered.*

*Main approaches used for teaching grammar, such as grammar-translation, audio-lingual and direct methods, have been examined. Direct method has been considered as the oral or natural method which is based on the active involvement of the learner in both speaking and listening to the new language in realistic everyday situations. Grammar-translation method has been based on analysis of the written language using translation exercises, reading comprehension and written imitation of texts. Audio-lingual method has been considered as a self-teaching method. The learning is based on repetition of dialogues about everyday situations that are imitated and drilled to make the response automatic. Distinct advantages and disadvantages of these methods have been analyzed.*

*Special attention has been paid to the usage of games in teaching English grammar. The importance and need of games in English classes have been clarified and the methods of their usage have been provided. Overall, introducing games into English classes can become an integral part of teaching grammar. Well-chosen games are invaluable as they give students a break and at the same time allow students to practice language skills. Games are highly motivating since they are amusing and at the same time challenging. Furthermore, they employ meaningful and useful language in real contexts. They also encourage and increase cooperation in the class.*

**Key words:** grammar-translation method, audio-lingual method, direct method, didactic game.