

THE IMPORTANCE OF GRAMMAR IN LEARNING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract: To judge by the way some people speak, there is no place for grammar in the language course nowadays; yet it is, in reality, as important as it ever was exercise of correct grammar, if he is to attain any skill of effective use of the language, but he need not know consciously formulated rules to account to him for that he does unconsciously correctly.

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In order to understand a language and to express oneself correctly one must assimilate the grammar mechanism of the language studied. Indeed, one may know all the words in a sentence and yet fail to understand it, if one does not see the relation between the words in the given sentence. And vice versa, a sentence may contain one, two, and more unknown words but if one has a good knowledge of the structure of the language one can easily guess the meaning of these words or at least find them in a dictionary. No speaking is possible without the knowledge of grammar, without the forming of a grammar mechanism. If learner has acquired such a mechanism, he can produce correct sentences in a foreign language. Paul Roberts writes: "Grammar is something that produces the sentences of a language. By something we mean a speaker of English. If you speak English natively, you have built into you rules of English grammar. In a sense, you are an English grammar. You possess, as an essential part of your being, a very complicated apparatus which enables you to produce infinitely many sentences, all English ones, including many that you have never specifically learned. Furthermore, by applying you rule you can easily tell whether a sentence that you hear a grammatical English sentence or not."

A command of English as is envisaged by the school syllabus cannot be ensured without the study of grammar. Pupils need grammar to be able to aid, speak, read, and write in the target language.

The Psychological characteristics of grammar skills. To develop one's speech means to acquire essential patterns of speech and grammar patterns in particular. Children must use these items automatically during speech-practice. The automatic use of grammar items in our speech (oral and written) supposes mastering some particular skills – the skills of using grammar items to express one's own thoughts, in other words to make up your sentences.

We must get so-called reproductive or active grammar skills. A skill is treated as an automatic part of awareness. Automatization of the action is the main feature of a skill. The nature of Automatization is characterized by that psychological structure of the action which adopts to the conditions of performing the action owing frequent experience. The action becomes more frequent, correct and accurate and the number of the operations is shortened while forming the skill the character of awareness of the action is changing, i.e. fullness of understanding is paid to the conditions and quality of performing to the control over it and regulation.

The Automatization occurs under more difficult conditions, when the child can't concentrate his attention on one element of the action. The whole structure of the action is improved and the automatization of its separate components is completed. During our speech the reproductive grammar skills are formed together with lexis and intonation, they must express the speaker's intentions. The actions in the structural setting of the lexis must be learnt. The characteristic feature of the reproductive grammar skills is their flexibility. It doesn't depend on the level of Automatization, i.e. on perfection of skill here mean the original action: both the structure of sentence, and forms of the words are reproduced by the speaker using different lexical material. If the child reproduces sentences and different words, which have been learnt by him as "a ready-made thing" he can say that there is no grammar skill. Learning the ready-made forms, word combinations and sentences occurs in the same way as learning lexis.

The grammar skill is based on the general conclusion. The grammar action can and must occur only in the definite lexical limits, on the definite lexical material. If the pupil can make up his sentence frequently, accurately and correctly from the grammatical point of view, he has got the grammar skill.

Teaching grammar at school using the theoretical knowledge brought some critical and led to confusion. All the grammatical rules were considered to be evil and there were some steps to avoid using them at school.

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But when we learn grammatical items in models, we use substitution and such a type of training gets rid of grammar or “neutralizes” it. By the way, teaching the skills to make up sentences by analogy is a step on the way of forming grammar skills. It isn’t the lexical approach to grammar and it isn’t neutralization of grammar, but using basic sentences in order to use exercises by analogy and to reduce number of grammar rules when forming the reproductive grammar skills.

To form the reproductive grammar skills, we must follow such steps:

1. selection the model of sentence.
2. selection the form of the word and formation of wordforms.
3. selection the auxiliary words-preposition, articles, and etc. and their combination with principle words.

The main difficulty of the reproductive (active) grammar skills is to correspond the purposes of the statement, communicative approach (a question an answer and so on), words, meanings, expressed by the grammatical patterns. In that case we use basic sentences, in order to answer the definite situation. The main factor of the forming of the reproductive grammar skill is that pupils need to learn the lexis of the language. They need to learn the meanings of the words and how they are used. We must be sure that our pupils are aware of the vocabulary they need at their level and they can use the words in order to form their own sentence. Each sentence contains a grammar structure. The mastering the grammar skill lets pupils save time and strength, energy, which can give opportunity to create. Learning a number of sentences containing the same grammatical structure and a lot of words containing the same grammatical form isn’t rational. But the generalization of the grammar item can relieve the work of the mental activity and let the teacher speed up the work and the children realize creative activities.

The process of creation is connected with the mastering of some speech stereotypes the grammatical substrate is hidden in basic sentences. Grammar is presented as itself. Such a presentation of grammar has its advantage: the grammar patterns of the basic sentences are connected with each other. But this approach gives pupils the opportunity to realize the grammar item better. The teaching must be based on grammar explanations and grammar rules. Grammar rules are to be understood as a special way of expressing communicative activity. The reproductive grammar skills supposed to master the grammar actions which are necessary for expressing thoughts in oral and written forms.

The automatic perception of the text supposes the reader to identify the grammar form according to the formal features of words, word combinations, sentences which must be combined with the definite meaning. One must learn the rules in order to identify different grammatical forms. Pupils should get to know their features, the ways of expressing them in the language. We teach children to read and aid by means of grammar. It reveals the relation between words in the sentence. Grammar is of great important when one teaches reading and aiding.

The forming of the perceptive grammar and reproductive skills is quite different. The steps of the work are mastering the reproductive skills differ from the steps in mastering the perceptive skills. To master the reproductive grammar skills, one should study the basic sentences or models. To master the perceptive grammar skills, one should identify and analyze the grammar item. Though training is of great importance to realize the grammar item.

In order to understand a language and express oneself correctly one must assimilate the grammar mechanism of a language. Indeed, one may know all the words in a sentence and yet fail to understand it, if one does not see the relationship between the words in the given sentence. And vice versa, a sentence may contain one, two, and more unknown words but if one has a good knowledge of the structure of the language one can easily guess the meanings of these words or at least find them in a dictionary. No speaking is possible without the knowledge of grammar, without the forming of a grammar mechanism. Children need grammar to be able to speak, and write in the target language. Our aim is to form grammar skills and prevent children from making grammar mistakes in their speech. The aim of foreign languages in primary schools is to develop pupils’ skills in order to understand speech and participate in conversation. The method and techniques the teacher should use in teaching children of primary school is the direct method and various techniques which can develop pupils’ listening comprehension and speaking. We have examined two kinds of grammar skills: the reproductive and receptive grammar skills.

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