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TEACHING GRAMMAR AT THE INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

PREDAREA GRAMATICII LA NIVELUL INTERMEDIAR

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Abstract

Grammar contributes to the harmonious systemic arrangement of words at the levels of syntaxis and morphology which helps utterance understanding unaccessible alone. In the context of teaching a foreign language which presupposes teaching oral and written communication skills in the given language, the purpose of teaching grammar is mastering the grammatical structure of the respective language. It is extremely difficult to master a language at the oral level and impossible without written without studying English.

Key -words: grammar, syntaxis, rules, utterance, communication

Rezumat

Gramatica contribuie la aranjarea sistemică și armonioasă a cuvintelor la nivel de sintaxă și morfologie ceea ce ajută la înțelegerea discursului care nu poate fi făcut exclusiv. În contextul predării unei limbi străine care presupune predarea abilităților de comunicare orale și scrise în limba respectivă, scopul predării gramaticii este cunoașterea structurii limbii respective. Este extrem de dificil să stăpânești o limbă la nivel oral și este imposibil fără să studiezi gramatica limbii engleze.

Cuvinte-cheie: gramatică, sintaxă, reguli, elocvență, comunicare

At any level, the basic tools students need to speak English with confidence are Grammar, Vocabulary, Pronunciation. Grammar is very difficult to define. One could consider the systemic features of a language or one could consider the study of those language features. One could go further and look at types of grammar, for example, traditional grammar, formal grammar or functional grammar. A simple definition of grammar does not exist. Celce-Mucia and Larsen- Freeman [3, p.123] define grammar as serving two purposes, that is, structure and communicative use. Their definition is based on three levels, which are revolve around sentence structure as the basic unit of meaning in English. The three levels are:

- a) the “subsential or morphological level”;

- b) the” sentential or syntactic level”;
- c) the”suprasentential or discoursal level”.

Thornbury defines grammar as existing on four levels that is,” text, sentence, word and sound” [8, p.217]. He continues [8, p.50] by illustrating two main purposes of language, the “representational” and “interpersonal” functions [8, p.50]. The two purposes are further respectively defined as “representing the world as we experience it” and” influencing how thing happen in the world [8, p.50]. These two studies give two purposes, yet the purposes are not the same. The number of levels also differs. Another grammar researcher, Halliday, prefers the term “lexicogrammar” [5, p.89] because his definition includes both syntax and vocabulary. These authors all show similarities in their definitions; however, they do not operate from a common defined explanation. The shape of the Australian Curriculum gives the following explanation:” Grammar refers both to the language we use and the description of language as a system. In describing language, attention is paid to both structure (syntax) and meaning (semantic) at the level of the word, the sentence and the text “. In the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, Hornby defines grammar variously as: “1-the rules in a language for changing the form of words and joining them into sentences”; “2- a person’s knowledge and use of a language”; “3- a book containing a description of the rules of a language”; and “4-a particular theory that is intended to explain the rules of a language in general” [6. p.130]. Among theories of grammar appear descriptive and prescriptive grammars, make believe grammar, mental, pedagogical, reference, theoretical, traditional, transformational and functional grammars and many more. Descriptive grammar can be termed simply as an objective, non-judgmental description of the grammatical constructions of a language, whereas prescriptive grammar lays down the law and books no interference in how grammar should work. [6, p. 203]. Therefore, descriptive grammar contains theories which explain in a scientific way how language works without assuming correctness, while prescriptive grammar is thought of as the type taught by high school English teachers (at least of the past), who might have prescribed how one ought to speak in much the same way as a doctor might prescribe medicine. Make-believe grammar was brought to the fore by Gertrude Buck in the early twentieth century. The definition given by Buck of make-believe grammar is “the application of rules modelled upon those of the highly inflected Latin language to the facts of the English language, which is almost wholly uninflected” [1, p.21]. Buck rejected the notion of make-believe grammar as she considered that English was not an inferior kind of Latin. Dr Buck taught grammar, composition, rhetoric, and literary theory. She was particularly strong in making it clear that English grammar should be built upon how the language was actually spoken. Therefore, her aspiration was that grammar should be taught on actual speech, which would be informed by scientific study of language. Without this, she believed that grammar instruction did not deserve on actual speech, which would be informed by scientific study of language. Without this she believed that grammar instruction did not deserve to be included in the curriculum. Nowadays, this approach would be termed teaching grammar in context. Mental (or competence) grammar is generally understood to mean the type of grammar possessed by native speakers, that is, the ability to recognize whether a sentence is correct or not without necessarily being able to give a reason. When considering a

person's linguistic competence, a native speaker's grammar is regarded as a mental system, which, if acquired as an infant, does not need any specific instruction. This is supported by Chomsky, who asserts that all human beings are born with the ability to construct a mental grammar, provided they have adequate linguistic experience; he terms this ability for language the language faculty.[3,p.89] Culicovo and Nowak develop this further by claiming that if a grammar is formulated by a linguist, then it is an idealized description of such a mental grammar. [4, p.104] Pedagogical grammar can be termed a language teaching methodology for second language students involving grammatical analysis of elements of the target language. Reference grammar is used when describing the grammar of a language, while explaining the principles that govern the construction of words, phrases, clauses and sentences, in other words, grammar as explained in grammar reference texts. Theoretical grammar is the study of language components. It makes explicit the forms of grammar and provides scientific explanations in favor of a particular grammar over another. Traditional grammar involves prescribing rules and concepts regarding language structure; it can therefore be termed prescriptive. As can be gleaned from the term "traditional", it seeks to perpetuate a historical model of what is considered proper language according to rules and it relies heavily on language analysis. [7, p.91] Seaton goes on to explain that the grammatical term "rule" is not an external percept, but is a principle that is followed unconsciously and regularly in order to produce utterance level. Furthermore, his type of "rule" applies to how native speakers form sentences. Halliday defines his systemic functional grammar as having three components, that it is functional in three components, that is, it is functional in three senses : "in its interpretation of texts, of the system and of the elements of linguistic structures". [4, p.83] There are various definitions and many theories of grammar. All are valid, but none takes absolute place.

The Intermediate level is often a milestone for students: at this level, many students really begin to "take off" in terms of the ability to communicate. Students at this level need fresh challenge to help them to realize how much they know and make their passive knowledge active. At the intermediate level students learn strong adjectives, negative prefixes (un-, dis-, in- , im-, ir-, are added to adjectives), common adjective endings -ous, -able/-ible, -ive. They also learn expressions that modify adjectives: really, incredibly, very, quite, a bit. Students learn -ed /-ing adjectives. Adjectives+ prepositions. They have been taught the basic rules regarding comparative and superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs, so at this grammar focus should be mainly revision and consolidation. Students still mix up comparative and superlative forms and make mistakes with the rules for forming comparative and superlatives. They also confuse as and than, adjectives and adverbs. In many foreign language classes today grammar plays a very important if not central role.

As the English language nowadays is important and universal as a native language of worldwide society, exactly that's why process of learning must include wide range of techniques not only as a process of learning theories but also formation of human values. The reviewed adjectives as one of main and basic parts of speaking forms certain associations for a human worldview and perception. Their role is in objective evaluation of the world and its phenomena. The role of English adjectives axiology is considered as a method of language

valuation, representation of linguistic worldview by a human that allows us to determine reality and verity. Peculiarities of lexemes and their semantic variants are shown and also common lexicon of adjectives allows verbalization of universal notion in different variants.

Adjectives are one of the English parts of speech, although historically they were classed together with the nouns. An adjective is a word which acts to modify a noun in a sentence. While adjectives play a large role in many languages such as English many other languages have no adjectives at all. In English the set of adjectives is fairly well understood, though some people include other parts of speech such as articles like the in the class of adjectives.

There are two main roles an adjective may take in a sentence, and with a few exceptions each adjective is able to take either role just as easily. The first role is to act as a predicative adjective, in which the adjective modifies a preceding noun as a predicate, linked by a verb.

The second role an adjective may take is as an attributive adjective, in which it modifies a noun by being linked directly to the noun as part of the noun phrase.

In every language, adjectives are important elements of sentences. Using adjectives means that we can express the quality of any person or object. Without adjectives we could not say how any object looks like Not only pronouns and adjectives are the words which are used for description of something or somebody. Adjectives are important because they :

- describe a noun (person, place, or thing)
- tell more about a noun (person, place, or thing)
- make sentences more interesting
- affect the meaning of sentences

Whenever we use adjectives, adjectives make our writing more visual and vivid. Students will get a better idea of what we wish them to picture when they read anything. By the help of the adjectives people can hear, see, touch, taste, and even smell what the authors write. Use of adjectives makes reading much more fun. We need them in our daily life. Moreover, we use adjectives because we want to express ourselves, characters in a good or bad way. One word is worth a thousand pieces of gold. So we should keep up using adjectives in our own sentences.

As we are prospective teachers we have to teach “Adjectives” to the students. There are different ways to teach adjectives.

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