Teaching English Grammar using Interactive Methods

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ABSTRACT

Modern IT specialists as well as specialists in other non-linguistic fields of activity need to have communication skills in a professional environment. Some cases when students of non-linguistic educational institutions do not realize the fact of the semantic content of grammatical structures, which leads to misunderstanding or distortion of the content of the material are considered in the article.

KEYWORDS: communication skills, grammatical structures, misunderstanding of material, distortion of material, grammar skills, grammatical phenomena

Introduction

Modern IT specialists and specialists in other non-linguistic fields of activity urgently need communication skills in a professional environment. However, students of non-linguistic universities often do not understand the semantic filling of grammatical structures. Hence there is a misunderstanding or distortion of the content of the material which is being taught.

Often, students are also afraid to overcome the language barrier, because they are either incompetent in the use of grammatical phenomena, or use the simplest grammatical structures, neglecting to connect "bridges", verbal words, and grammatical constructions that make speech natural and euphonious. It is important to convey to students that the grammatical component is not just a form, but a linguistic phenomenon that affects the semantic aspect of a text or utterance.

Learning a language in the process of monotonous routine work is ineffective. If a technical university focuses on the semantic load of the text, then, as a rule, grammar will suffer, which negatively affects the quality of communication in a foreign language. On the other hand, the emphasis on the traditional descriptive way of teaching grammar leads to the impoverishment of the content side of the material. Practice shows that the best way is a combined approach to teaching grammar: a combination of the traditional structural-logical approach and a communicative approach (direct generation and perception of speech, active speech, and perceptual activity).

Ideally, the student should be able to automatically use relevant grammatical phenomena in a particular real situation, and be ready for correct communication in a foreign language, i.e. should have grammatical skills.

The acquisition of grammatical skills can occur implicitly and explicitly. With an intuitive approach, grammatical competence is formed naturally, using samples, models, repetition, and imitation of patterns, i.e. in the process of communication. The explicit method implies the use of traditional methods with the explanation of grammatical phenomena.

A communicative approach to the study of grammar does not mean that grammatical phenomena are not analyzed or exercises are not performed. It's just that the dominant is transferred to the activation of the speech function.

The process of transition from an explicit method to an implicit one takes place under the conditions of the principle of interactivity. Interactive learning presupposes close communication between teachers and students and between students in such types of speech activity as an information request, data exchange, expression of attitude to something, discussion of a problem, etc.

However, "communicative" does not necessarily mean "implemented in speech". This definition includes aspects such as:

➢ understanding and performing a communicative task
➢ creation of a real communicative situation involving collective involvement.

Teaching grammar using a communicative approach seems to be the most effective if the professional needs of students are taken into account in the conditions of a technical university. In this context, the creation of an educational speech situation as a model of a real speech situation is of particular importance.

Examples of exercises that can be used with this approach:
1. Exercises aimed at analyzing grammatical phenomena
2. Exercises aimed at choosing grammatical phenomena
3. Exercises of a systemic nature.

In such exercises, grammatical phenomena are not considered separately, as the structural-descriptive approach suggests, but all possible grammatical ways of expressing any grammatical phenomenon are taken into account, for example:

➢ the future tense: *I will download, we are looking for, is going to delete*;
➢ the modals of obligation: must, ought to, should, have to, be to, be supposed to, etc.

Thus, when studying modal verbs and their equivalents, students can discuss the rules of set etiquette in business correspondence using the following lexical and grammatical structures:

1. Firstly, the forms of the company are to be stored in digital format on the computer.

2. Certainly, you can sign your letters with the autograph, having scanned it and saved it in digital format.

3. Then, you have to indicate the number of pages with attachments if you send some with your letter.

4. What is more, you are supposed to indicate the extension, format, and quantity of graphic files.

5. Also in official letters no misprints, usage of different fonts, and mixing of Latin and Cyrillic are allowed.

6. Worst of all, you mustn't use emojis in your official letter.

7. When you receive a business letter, you are obliged to send a short notification of it immediately.

8. However, if you have received a letter, which is addressed not to you, you may not answer it.

9. Of course, you can encode your message.

10. You shouldn't use the function of automatic delivery of your messages too much.

Tasks related to the implementation of skills and abilities to give advice, warn, conduct a dialogue, dispute, etc. For example, the structures can be used in the following exercises:

➢ advise what rules should be followed when writing an official e-mail,

➢ list what is categorically not recommended to do in electronic business correspondence,

➢ prove that your interlocutor was wrong, neglecting certain rules adopted in official correspondence on the Internet. And yes, you can go directly to the work of the steps:

➢ an experienced user and a novice discuss the nuances of network etiquette;

➢ the manager and the subordinate discuss the latter's mistakes when sending business correspondence, etc.

Another example is the elaboration of conditional proposals based on the discussion of the problem "Does artificial intelligence threaten human beings?". After working through the text of the relevant topic, the student is offered a discussion, during which, for example, the following patterns can be used:

➢ **opponents of AI:**
1. If AI becomes too advanced it will present a great problem for human beings;

2. If AI becomes strong enough people won't be able to control it in an effective way;

3. If AI began to develop at an increasing rate humans couldn't compete and would be replaced by machines;

4. If AI started to accelerate on its own it would result at an end to the human race,

➢ **proponents of AI:**
1. If we have an effective regulatory environment we will be able to control the dangers of AI;

2. AI could only be dangerous if it had rational dimensions of the human mind;

3. Had it not been for the perfection of the human mind the machines might become the most advanced species on the planet;

4. If AI hadn't emerged the world couldn't have flourished.

In such exercises, the training of grammatical phenomena has an emotional-speech character, i.e. students do not just memorize grammatical forms, but the contact at the level of emotions - they ask, are surprised, regret, advise, resent, etc.

Thus, when using interactive exercises, the collective nature of work in the classroom, interpersonal interaction, joint study of educational tasks, and emotional empathy contribute to the activation of the educational process and help students to realize creative intentions, which has a beneficial effect on the effectiveness of mastering the material.

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