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TEACHING BASICS OF MODERN ENGLISH GRAMMAR TO STUDENTS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SCHOOL IN AZERBAIJAN

This article discusses a relevant topic that is of particular interest in the field of philology. Currently, English has become an extremely significant aspect in the Foreign Language Pedagogy. This is a generalized statement. However, the article goes beyond the general scope of the problem and delves more deeply, which is particularly valuable in contemporary scientific discourse. Specifically, the research aims at an in-depth understanding of the internal aspects of general linguistics, specifically grammar.

Additionally, the entire article is directed towards Azerbaijani students studying at international faculties, indicating a clear focus on this specific audience. With regard to the internal content of the article, it seems appropriate to indicate the following: first, a brief overview of the history of the issue is provided, followed by a discussion of the topic presented in the title; second, the content is "bound" to the current context of teaching English grammar, ensuring that it is relevant and applicable to international students; third, the article is closely aligned with the students' needs; then, the formulated assumptions are supported by examples; finally, footnotes are provided from the works of both foreign and Azerbaijani experts in the field of Foreign Language Pedagogy and Linguistics.

Keywords: *English; comprehensive education; grammar; national audience; methodological techniques; lexicon; comparative method.*

Introduction. Any modern language in a civilized country is a product of social interaction and communication. It is a factor of unity, and it results from people entering into various communicative relationships. As a social phenomenon, language is associated with different spheres of human activity, including international communication.

In Azerbaijan, English is an important means of communication with the world. Even at the conversational level, it is necessary to rely on grammar, which is an integral part of language. Mastering the literary form of the language is especially important for Azerbaijani students who choose professions related to international law, politics, or sociology. This is because they need to be able to communicate effectively in these fields.

More than half a century ago, not only in Azerbaijan but also in the world of methodological science, there was a false theory that a foreign language could be learned most easily from a dictionary by simply expanding

one's vocabulary periodically. This approach is, of course, an unacceptable solution to the problem and a non-professional approach. Over time, this theory "sank into oblivion".

On the one hand, as is the case with all other languages in the modern world, the vocabulary of English continues to expand at a slow but steady pace. On the other hand, not all newly coined words become widely used. Some of them become productive and are actively integrated into the language, while others remain less common and fail to develop properly in spoken and written communication, as well as in literature. Nevertheless, traces of this phenomenon can still be found today. Moreover, this idea has gained popularity among some circles due to the influence of the internet. In social media, one can often come across statements of a somewhat opportunistic nature suggesting that almost any foreign language, including English, can be mastered within a matter of one to two months. Obviously, grammar would be given less emphasis in such cases, as instructors would focus on the expansion of vocabulary (Кулиева, 2017).

Such applicants would like to provide a reasonable response to the above-mentioned proposal. Firstly, in line with the named theory, this approach is fundamentally incorrect. It is evident that there is no value in computer-generated advertising videos as they do not even provide a hint of learning English grammar.

Secondly, the proposed method of language teaching completely disregards the possibility of mastering the language at a literary level, as it does not provide any opportunity for students to develop their skills in reading, writing, and critical thinking.

Finally, we believe that this decision is unacceptable for students of the International Faculty of Humanities at universities in our country, as this approach essentially disregards the potential for mastering English within a literary context.

It is clear that attaining the highest level of language proficiency is essential for any serious and responsible student, as they will undoubtedly require communication with native speakers in the future, including in-

ternational delegates. Any errors in style or grammar are unacceptable, and therefore it is crucial to aim for the highest possible level of English proficiency (Кулієва, 2017).

As we understand it, a high level of proficiency in English can only be attained through a thorough comprehension of its grammatical structures. Grammar forms the basis for mastering a language and serves as a springboard for achieving ideal proficiency, with all the implications that entails. This article emphasizes the significance of paying close attention to grammatical correctness in the learning process of English.

The theoretical basis for the article is formed by the views of Azerbaijani and international authors on the teaching of English grammar. These perspectives were considered and further developed with regard to the specific context of international relations faculties at Azerbaijani universities.

A typical example is provided, and references are made to the work of N. Shahmuradova, N. Hajieva, A. Rustamov, and M. Shiraliyev, who have addressed this issue, more specifically in a comparative context. The article demonstrates that this approach is linked to interlanguage factors and contextual and situational considerations.

The primary purpose of this paper is to examine the current state of affairs in the teaching of English grammar to students of international relations faculties, and to suggest measures that would help to better meet the needs of these students.

The methodological basis for this research is the work of primarily Azerbaijani and international scholars who have addressed the subject under investigation. This paper employs methods of visual and empirical analysis, comparative analysis, and the comparison and systematisation of empirical and theoretical data.

Results and discussion. In today's globalized world, international educational partnerships are expanding, and the demand for young people to study abroad and learn foreign languages is increasing. The success of these individuals in their academic pursuits and their future professional development depends on their capacity to adapt to the new social environment in which they find themselves. This process of adjustment can be challenging, as it requires adapting to a different social setting and lifestyle (Danes, 1974).

From the introductory part of our discussion, it has become clear that without a thorough understanding of grammar, acquiring new vocabulary is an impossible task. It is also difficult to discuss the repetition of previously covered material, as

common mistakes will inevitably occur, leading to challenges in oral communication. When communicating internationally, these mistakes become more evident, directly impacting the use of the English language. These errors can be attributed to various aspects of society, including historical, linguistic, philological, lexical, cultural, literary and artistic influences. The widespread use of English has led both modern scholars, linguists and ordinary individuals to realize the significance of mastering the fundamentals of grammar.

The study of relevant literature on our selected topic has allowed us to determine that R. Gaibova and O. Musayev were the first to recognize the importance and need for the study of English grammar at the international level in our republic. Their research dates back to the late 1950s and early 1960s, and over half a century has passed since then. Nevertheless, some of their ideas continue to be relevant. R. Gaibova was among the first Azerbaijani female scholars to address the issue of effective methods for teaching grammar in her writings (Гаїбова, 1957). She strongly advocated for the introduction of English language courses in schools, including one-year programs and elective courses, as well as universities across the country. Grammar has therefore become the foundation for learning modern English for people of different ages. Not only students and school-aged individuals, but also adults in the country benefit from this approach. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the work of these linguistic scholars and methodologists took place during the well-known "Khrushchev Thaw" and was done, as they say, under personal risk. Additionally, the challenge of teaching the grammar of the language has been established on an international scale.

In connection with the above, we would like to provide a brief explanation. Firstly, the authors ensured that this language became an independent discipline in evening schools and later in universities in Azerbaijan. They supported the idea that grammar is the foundation of foreign language learning, and minor errors in lexicology or stylistics can occur. According to our view, a professional can easily correct these errors by reviewing students' independent work or homework. These errors from students are more commonly found in written work, which are noticed by experienced teachers. Pronunciation issues can also be addressed during a group lesson with a more advanced student providing an example of clear speech, serving as a model for the whole group (Кулієва, 2017).

Syntax, which is frequently studied at the Faculty of International Relations in Baku in

the final years of a student's course, is a theoretical aspect of language learning. However, a lack of knowledge of the fundamentals of grammar objectively hinders a student from establishing a solid foundation for future study, as it impedes the ability to understand and memorize texts as a whole.

This information may be of particular relevance to international students who are likely to face these challenges in their future careers. Moreover, gaps in grammatical knowledge may prove to be significant barriers in the long run, particularly when pursuing a career path that is more closely linked to international politics or involves interaction with organizations such as UNESCO.

And now, let us proceed directly to the discussion of the main topic. The renowned Azerbaijani linguistic and methodological expert of recent years, N. Shahmuradova, has emphasized that in the process of learning English grammar, it is essential to "understand not only the specific characteristics of English, but also the native language, with the ability to compare and contrast the two" (Шахмурадова, 1962, p. 5). This insightful observation, we believe, remains relevant today. The comparative method has always served as a guide in linguistics, literature, and foreign language teaching.

It can be challenging to present students with grammar material in a foreign language when they do not have a perfect command of their mother tongue. Moreover, as N. Shahmuradova's statement revealed, it does not imply the ability to perform basic translation operations, such as accurately translating individual words or phrases into one's native language.

The main point is that students will be provided with information about the grammar of the English language based on a comparison with another language. It should be noted that similar ideas have been proposed by some Russian researchers at approximately the same time (although they may have been partially expressed earlier). However, the essence of the matter does not lie solely in the chronological order of these ideas. These ideas are particularly relevant to the development of English grammar materials in Azerbaijan with the aim of adapting the selection of teaching methods in universities in the country.

Grammar, however, undeniably necessitates the use of various techniques within its range. If we look at the past, it becomes evident that over the last few decades, systematic science has made significant progress in this field, developing a comprehensive set of principles, methods, and criteria for selecting individual linguistic units, expressions, phrases, and sentences (Danes, 1974).

These units can be considered both individually, separately from related linguistic phenomena, and collectively, where one phenomenon is closely linked to another, develops into it, or occurs simultaneously with it.

Let us be more precise. The methodological approach that is implemented in students' practice of working with specific grammatical materials is not different from another approach, but it is presented as a part of the overall approach. For instance, exercises to assess students' knowledge of grammar rules for certain parts of speech are integrated with other exercises. Moreover, we refer to the use of significant and efficient techniques that genuinely facilitate the exchange of skills and knowledge and meet the current requirements of methodological research. When combined in line with the main branches of English linguistics (grammar, phonetics, vocabulary, orthography, and syntax), these techniques constitute a fairly substantial part of the overall linguistic structure.

Grammar plays a significant role in acquiring new knowledge, particularly in the areas mentioned. The renowned linguist E. Galkina-Fedoruk argues correctly in this regard. She argues that the foundation of grammatical knowledge, in combination with the study of other aspects of a foreign language, provides a solid basis for learning that allows experienced teachers to effectively acquire new knowledge (Галкина-Федорук, 1964).

It is characteristic that teaching should be based on innovative, non-traditional teaching methods for a range of subjects, including English. Specifically, the development of students' original thinking abilities should be the primary focus. To maximize the realization of these abilities, the study of grammatical information is essential. This serves not only as a foundation for rapid acquisition of the English language through dubious modern techniques, but also as a basis for reliable and lasting mastery.

As far as we are able to determine, at the Faculty of International Relations in Baku, this knowledge is presented in courses in an order of increasing grammatical difficulty. We will not delve into the psychological aspect of grammar as a catalyst for the intellectual activity of the brain, in which students independently propose hypotheses for discussion while demonstrating new knowledge and skills. This may lead us somewhat away from the main focus of this article, but it should be noted with certainty that this type of education, ideally, should be provided by teachers at universities in Azerbaijan in a consistent and targeted manner.

These techniques are significant as they represent a coherent and integrated approach to the study of English grammar. We believe this approach is suitable for all students, regardless of their level of academic achievement, who wish to learn the English language. It is especially relevant for students studying at the Faculty of International Relations in Azerbaijani universities that offer both humanitarian and technical programs.

It should be noted that current researchers often face several challenges when selecting methodological approaches to mastering English grammar. While reviewing textbooks published in Azerbaijan during the late 20th century, it was necessary to some extent to rely on bilingual materials. However, which type of bilingualism should be used? It is not a secret that international students in Azerbaijani universities need to study English using texts (assignments, exercises, or other materials) in their native language due to a lack of suitable textbooks. On the other hand, trilingualism may not always be effective. First, it requires a high level of proficiency in at least two languages, which can conflict with educational requirements and, more specifically, the realities of life in the country.

This is one aspect of the issue. The other aspect relates to a purely linguistic issue, namely, teaching English grammar should be approached in a systematic manner. This, in turn, should be based on a well-structured plan and strict adherence to guidelines. Each subsequent aspect of grammar should only be studied after the previous aspect has been covered, and students' progress should be recorded throughout the process (Danes, 1974).

It should be noted that contemporary researchers often encounter several challenges in selecting methodological approaches for mastering English grammar. When reviewing textbooks published in Azerbaijan in the late 20th century, there was a need, to some extent, to rely on bilingual materials. However, what type of bilingualism should be employed? It is no secret that international students at Azerbaijani universities are required to study English using texts (assignments, exercises, or other materials) in their native language due to the absence of suitable textbooks. Trilingualism, on the other hand, may not always be effective. Firstly, it requires an excellent command of at least two languages, which may conflict with educational requirements and more specifically, with the realities of life in the country.

This is one aspect of the matter. The other aspect concerns a purely linguistic matter, namely, the teaching of English grammar

should be approached systematically. This, in turn, should be based on a carefully structured plan and strict adherence to guidelines. Each subsequent section of grammar should be studied only after the previous section has been completed, and students' responses recorded in the process.

In the field of socio-pragmatic studies of language, the functional characteristics of linguistic phenomena are explored from various angles. The most prominent of these is the communicative approach, which integrates functional and communicative perspectives to focus on identifying the targeted socio-communicative meanings conveyed through linguistic expressions in interactions between communication participants during the exchange of ideas.

One challenge in developing socio-pragmatic skills among students in international faculties of higher education when teaching foreign languages is exploring the content aspect of linguistic units related to individuals who, from a pragmatic point of view, use language as a means of communication and guide their activities in a specific direction, making independent choices to achieve their goals (Новицкая, Кучин, 1963).

As far as we are informed, the hours allocated to grammar classes for Azerbaijani students in the Faculty of International Relations are equally distributed among other areas of contemporary English linguistics. Therefore, the frequency with which the material, namely the grammatical rules, is revised is particularly significant for these students, considering that the hours devoted to grammar are comparatively evenly distributed across the various fields of English linguistics in general. Hence, both teachers and students should review the time allotment. It is appropriate, in this regard, to emphasize, as stated in the monograph by T. Belyaeva and V. Khomyakov, that "for students, it may be more beneficial to study English grammar over a shorter period of time but on a regular basis, rather than dispersed over an extended period with lengthy gaps" (Беляева, Хомьяков, 1985, p. 66–67).

A significant point to note. Although this is directly applicable to students from Russia's "northern capital", we believe it is also relevant for Azerbaijani students. At first glance, this may seem counterintuitive, but we maintain that this "time-based approach" to learning is the most efficient way to achieve desired results.

To illustrate the points made, we would like to highlight an interesting example provided by Leyla Huseynova in her doctoral thesis. She discusses the proper allocation of tasks related to contemporary verb forms in

the English language. As a representative example, she cites the work of N. Z. Hajieva, A. B. Rustamova, and M. Sh. Shiraliyev, who addressed this issue in a comparative context. According to Huseynova's thesis, instructors should first inform international students that all events occur in time. Next, they should explain that English and Azerbaijani languages have developed an intricate and extensive system of grammatical tools to express temporal notions, both in straightforward and complex statements. The aforementioned Azerbaijani researchers conclude that the plethora of these instruments, which are employed to depict temporal values, is indeed boundless. Specifically, in the context of a single sentence, a statement with a distinct temporal significance is utilized for this purpose. Therefore, L. Huseynova suggests the following grammatical exercise for consideration (Гусейнова, 2004):

1. Specify the time within which the following action takes place:

a) The action takes up a portion of that time:

- *He was having a holiday in autumn - Onun bayramı payızda idi;*

b) The coverage of the entire time period:
- *left for a month - bir ayliğa getdi;*

c) Indicates the frequency of repeated actions:

- *comes in the evenings - axşamlar gəlir;*

2.) Mark the limit:

a) starting:

- *is known from long ago - qədimdən məlumdur;*

b) final:

- *He were waiting till 10 o'clock in the evening - axşam saat 10 qədər gözlədik.*

Therefore, the "connections" that we have identified clearly indicate associative correspondence or, alternatively, inconsistency in temporal structures between the two languages. Even within the context of a specific question, these connections clearly demonstrate, in our opinion, that verbs are considered one of the most challenging and original parts of speech in English.

These connections are attributed not only to foreign linguists, but also to Azerbaijani scholars. All students should master basic grammatical structures through practical application and become familiar with the grammatical framework of English sentences. They should be able to independently construct correct sentences and correctly combine words, selecting appropriate endings according to the grammar rules of the English language.

Conclusion. Grammar is a system of rules that govern language, comprising two subsystems: morphology and syntax. Since a

young age, children unconsciously learn the grammar of their native language while learning to communicate. Consequently, the teaching of grammar for native speakers differs from that for foreign language learners. The goal of teaching English as a foreign language is to help students achieve an automated level of knowledge of the grammatical system, meaning a level at which grammar is used unconsciously, similar to the way they would communicate in their native language.

To illustrate conscious language activity in the early stages of English language learning for students in international relations, consider a scenario where a student mentally constructs a sentence and then expresses it using all the grammatical elements they have learned.

Based on the above, it is clear that teaching the grammar of modern English should be carried out in a systematic and structured manner. International students should carefully study one grammatical point, which will naturally lead them to other areas of grammar and then on to lexicology and syntax.

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ДО ПИТАННЯ НАВЧАННЯ ОСНОВАМ ГРАМАТИКИ СУЧАСНОЇ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНСЬКИХ СТУДЕНТІВ-МІЖНАРОДНИКІВ

Анотація. *Актуальність статті* визначається тим, що у наш час англійська мова стала надзвичайно важливим аспектом у педагогічній діяльності.

Стаття виходить за рамки загальної проблеми, що особливо цінно у сучасному науковому дискурсі. Зокрема дослідження спрямоване на навчання глибокому розумінню внутрішніх аспектів загальної лінгвістики, зокрема граматики. Що стосується внутрішнього змісту статті, то доречно відзначити наступне: по-перше, дається короткий огляд історії питання, за яким йде обговорення теми, винесеної в заголовок; по-друге, зміст «прив'язаний» до поточного контексту викладання граматики англійської мови, що актуально для студентів-міжнародників; по-третє, підхід повністю відповідає потребам студентів. Сформульовані припущення підкріплюються прикладами і наводяться висновки з робіт як зарубіжних, так і азербайджанських фахівців у сфері педагогіки іноземних мов і лінгвістики.

Теоретичною основою статті є методичні напрацювання азербайджанських та зарубіжних авторів щодо навчання граматиці англійської мови. Результати цих напрацювань були прийняті до уваги і отримали подальший розвиток стосовно специфіки факультетів міжнародних відносин в азербайджанських університетах. У статті показано, що порівняльний контекст методичних підходів пов'язаний із

міжмовними факторами, а також контекстуальними та ситуативними міркуваннями.

Основна мета статті полягає в аналізі поточного стану справ у викладанні граматики англійської мови студентам-міжнародникам та пропозиції заходів, які допомогли б краще задовольнити потреби цих студентів.

Методологічною основою дослідження є роботи переважно азербайджанських та окремих зарубіжних вчених, які займалися студійованою темою. У статті використовуються методи візуального, емпіричного та порівняльного аналізу, а також зіставлення та систематизації емпіричних та теоретичних даних.

Висновки. Виходячи з вищевикладеного логічно дійти висновку, що навчання граматиці сучасної англійської мови має проводитись систематично та поетапно таким чином, щоб студенти-міжнародники могли ретельно вивчити одну граматичну концепцію, яка природно призведе до потреби опанування змісту інших розділів граматики, а потім – до лексикології та синтаксису.

Ключові слова: англійська мова; комплексне навчання; граMATика; національна аудиторія; методичні прийоми; лексикон; порівняльний метод.

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