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A VISUAL METHOD FOR TEACHING GRAMMAR CONCEPTS

The paper is devoted to the visual methods of teaching grammar in the English language. The main difficulties that may arise in the process of teaching English grammar are considered. The peculiarities of the foreign language teaching of children and adults are also described. The article contains examples illustrating which visual methods of teaching English grammar are available, how they are used and what are the similarities and differences in teaching grammar to children and adults. It also provides an initial examination of the visual aids of teaching grammar to children and adults.

Key words: grammar, teaching, language, methodology, approach, visual aids.

Formulation of the scientific problem. Teaching grammar is the cornerstone of any language teaching in the world because of the importance of grammar itself. Grammar can be defined as the way a language manipulates and combines words or bits of words in order to form longer units of meaning. There is no doubt then that teaching grammatical rules constitutes an essential aspect in the mastering of a given language. But teaching grammar through visual aids seems to be important in the sense that it arouses interest, motivation in the pupils in beginner classes.

Analysis of the latest investigations of the issues. Although second language acquisition research has not definitively answered many important questions regarding form-focused instruction, studies have provided promising evidence that focus on form is correlated with more acquisition of new grammar and vocabulary than non-form-focused approaches. R. Ellis [6], H. Basturkmen [2], and S. Loewen [8] found out that learners engaged in communicative, focus-on-form activities improved their grammatical accuracy and their use of new forms. According to S. Loewen [8] short episodes of corrective feedback correlate with higher rates of correctness on subsequent tests. Some empirical studies prove that various focus-on-form techniques (discussed below) have led to more accurate use of target structures. A synthesis of the findings from a large review of research on the needs of English language learners suggested that they learn best with instruction that combines interactive approaches with explicit instruction [7].

The **aim** of the investigation is to consider the main methods of visual teaching of grammar concepts.

The **object** is visual methods, ways and approaches to teaching English grammar.

The **subject** is to study the specific features of teaching grammar to young learners as well as adults in the context of using visual methods.

Presentation of the basic material and interpretation of the results of the investigation.

Teaching grammar through visual aids to young learners. The teacher, the classroom, the pupils and the environment can provide visual aids when teaching grammar in the first cycle. In his or her class, the teacher can use visual aids to teach preposition by drawing different objects placed in different spots. The teacher can hang pictures on the board and explain different rules of grammar.

Still, there may be some drawbacks that may occur in teaching grammar through visual aids. A single picture may, occasionally, be used to teach the meaning of a word or phrase new to the students.

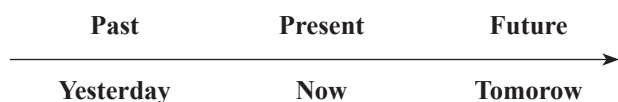
However, pictures are usually ambiguous; people can interpret them differently. The other problem that occurs is that some teachers cannot draw pictures.

The purpose of teaching grammar through visual aids is to develop listening, reading, speaking and writing at the same time. Pictures are used to arouse interest in pupils and they help them to “translate” the meaning of the text or of individual items of language. The pictures also give the pupils a context for the language and for their activity. Pictures can contribute to the search for specific information in the text and as a result help the students demonstrate verbally how he or she understood the information. Moreover, the purpose of visual aids is to motivate, to stimulate and guide the student.

There are numerous ways of using visual aids when teaching grammar in the classroom. So, the teacher must consider that visual aids are always pictures and

objects. The classroom is important because it gives the teacher the tools in order to instruct through visual aids. The teacher can use the whiteboard which is useful when sticking posters, pictures, drawings etc.

When speaking of teaching tenses, the teachers can use for example the top of the whiteboard which may represent the past, the middle may represent the present simple and the bottom the future. He or she can draw a diagram like this on the board to represent time.



The whiteboard is indeed of paramount importance but it presents some drawbacks because it does not move from its place like a touch board.

Now, in order to have broader view of this point, we are going to elaborate two questionnaires, one from the teachers' answers and the other from the students' answers. This will be put in the following paper.

But we are going to use these data in order to trial a lesson in 6th grade. That lesson is entitled:

The different prepositions:

As a warm-up activity, the teacher will first revise the previous lesson. For example he or she can use the calendar as a visual aid to show again the different days of the week. The day when the grammar structure is being taught can be used as present (today), the day before as past (yesterday) and the day after as future (tomorrow).

The timetable can also be a visual aid to explain tenses in this sense:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	French	English	Arabic	
	2	1	3	

Student 1: It is Wednesday today, I have English (present simple).

Student 2: It was Tuesday yesterday, I had French (past simple).

Student 3: It will be Thursday tomorrow, I will have Arabic (future simple) [4].

When teaching prepositions through visual aids, the teacher can use these drawings from Andrew Wright's book "*Pictures for teachers to copy*" in order to help the students visualize the images on by on.

For another grammar lesson in 6th grade, the teacher can also use pictures.

For example, when teaching comparative forms, pictures can be helpful for students to master quickly some forms of comparison. The pictures are going to illustrate that [3].

To help young learners to master sentence structure, the sentences with simple English words and, not unfamiliar Latin words are described below.

This approach helps children to learn almost instantly how to write well-formed sentences.

Example of the sentence:

On a bitter-cold winter morning, Malcolm Maxwell, a young man of simple means but good intentions, left the quiet country town in which he'd been raised and set off on the bold errand he'd been preparing for all his life.

Like all sentences, this one is made up of parts. In this system, there are four kinds of sentence parts:

1. **Main Parts.** These parts contain the main action of the sentence: "Malcolm Maxwell, ... left the quiet country town in which he'd been raised, ..." (Notice that the teacher doesn't have to call this a "main clause" or refer to a "main verb".)

2. **Lead-In Parts.** These parts lead into other parts, especially main parts: "On a bitter-cold winter morning, ..." (Notice that one shouldn't worry about what Latin grammatical function this "phrase" performs. Is it "adverbial", "adjectival", "prepositional"? Who cares? Certainly not the children.)

3. **In-Between Parts.** These parts fall in between other parts. They feel like a slight interruption: "... a young man of simple means but good intentions, ..." (Notice that one shouldn't call this a "non-restrictive phrase or clause" or worry about things like "direct or indirect objects"; It is better to avoid "subordination" here and when working with Lead-In Part as well.)

4. **Add-On Parts.** These extra parts convey additional information about other parts: "... and set off on the bold errand he'd been preparing for all his life". (Notice that the teacher doesn't have to worry about "compound, complex, and compound/complex sentences", nor does he or she have to explain "appositive constructions".) [1].

Using this system, the model sentence can look like this: Lead-In + Main + In-Between + Main (continued) + Add-On.

New sentences can be created by combining different parts in different ways. To make longer sentences, more parts can be added. But it's surprising how effective we can be with just a few.

Six Simple Patterns

Here are six of the simpler patterns typical of those used as models to help kids construct their own:

1. Intro + Main As class began, Mr. Funston dreamed of a winter vacation.

2. Main + Add-On He stared blankly at the blank faces of his students convinced that he had nothing whatsoever to teach them.

3. Main + In-Between + Main The Lesser Antilles, he realized, would be the perfect place for a warm winter hiatus.

4. Main + Add-On + Add-On He saw himself on the beach, baking in the midday sun, enjoying tasty snacks and refreshing beverages.

5. Intro + In-Between + Main Ten minutes later, having dismissed his students early to lunch, he surfed the Net for a cheap trip to the West Indies.

6. Main + In-Between + Add-On Mr. Funston leaned back in his big teacher chair, forgetting about the twelve pounds he'd put on at Thanksgiving, and immediately tumbled backward into the October bulletin board he'd neglected to take down [1].

A visual method for teaching grammar to adults.

The example provided in this section has multiple objectives-to teach the grammatical components of a sentence, to help students broaden their vocabularies, and to help students use wordplay as a means of teaching sentence structure.

Students will:

- analyze and define the basic components of a sentence
- evaluate a writer's use of nouns and verbs in a New York Times article
- synthesize their vocabulary and sentence structure knowledge by writing original sentences with particular nouns and verbs as the main subjects and predicates of those sentences

Materials:

- student notebooks
- white board
- computers with Internet access
- copies of the New York Times article "At 16, a Star at the Chessboard, but Adrift in School and Life" (one per student)
- index cards in two different colors (enough for each small group to receive four cards of each color)

Warm Up:

Defining a grammatical sentence by example:

Write the following two-word sentence on the board in large letters: "Love stinks". Ask students to write a response to the following question in their notebooks or journals: "Do these two words (i.e., 'Love stinks.')

make a sentence?" If so, explain how these two words qualify as a grammatical sentence. Elicit students' responses and establish that a grammatical sentence contains a subject (who or what the sentence is about) and a predicate (what the subject is or does) and expresses a complete thought.

Have students identify "love" as the subject and "stinks" as the predicate in the example sentence.

Instruction:

Using the Visual Thesaurus to identify words' definitions and parts of speech in the context of a sentence:

Point out that although "love" and "stink" have multiple meanings and can act as different parts of speech that each of these words is being used in a particular way in the example sentence.

Challenge students to use the Visual Thesaurus to identify the parts of speech for the two words "love" and "stinks" in the example sentence. You can model this process for the class by displaying the word webs for "love" and "stink" on the whiteboard and then by asking students to help you identify the parts of speech and definitions for the words that apply to the context of the sentence "Love stinks". Students should recognize that in the example sentence "love" is a noun meaning "a strong positive emotion of regard and affection" and that "stink" is a verb meaning "be extremely bad in quality or in one's performance". [8].

Identifying interesting nouns and verbs in a text:

Explain that a sentence's subject often contains a noun and that a sentence's predicate contains a verb. (If students are unfamiliar with the concepts "noun" and "verb", review that a noun is a person, place, thing or idea whereas a verb is a word that expresses the action or existence of a subject.)

Distribute copies of the New York Times article "At 16, a Star at the Chessboard, but Adrift in School and Life" (see handout) or have students view the article on-line by providing students with the following URL: www.nytimes.com (Note: you could use any article, text, or vocabulary list for this activity. For example, you could use a list of SAT-prep words, a chapter from a novel, a textbook entry, etc.)

Inform students that they are about to read a New York Times article about a nationally-ranked sixteen year old chess whiz from Brooklyn who is in danger of failing out of high school. As they read this article, they should underline or otherwise note any interesting or challenging nouns or verbs that appear in the article.

Take a moment and discuss the content of the Times article by asking students if they believe chess has saved or ruined Shawn Martinez's life. How could both of these perspectives be supported by quotes from the article? How would Shawn Martinez answer this question?

One of the methods include creating a word wall of subject and predicate options:

Have students join small groups to “pool” their lists of interesting or challenging nouns and verbs that they circled as they read “At 16, a Star at the Chessboard, but Adrift in School and Life”. Then, distribute eight index cards to each group, four of one color for recording “nouns” and four of another color for recording “verbs”. Groups should use the Visual Thesaurus in determining parts of speech for those words with which they are unfamiliar.

Inform groups that they should choose four interesting or challenging nouns and write each of these nouns in large letters on a separate “noun” card and then choose four interesting or challenging verbs and write each of these verbs in large letters on a separate “verb” card. The nouns and verbs that they choose do not necessarily have to act as the main subjects or predicates of the sentences in which they appear, but they should stand out to group members for one reason or another. For example, some interesting nouns from the article could include (but are not limited to) the following list of words: Brooklyn, Shakespeare, atrium, hustlers, truant, passion, White House, contradictions, enigma, pawns. Verbs could include (but are not limited to) the following list of words: eliminates, transforms, questions, parries, barring, intended, flunked, evolved, herded, assuring, prohibits, cracked.

The teacher may create a two-columned word wall on the board by posting each group’s noun and verb submissions. As each group submits its word submissions, have them define the word and reveal where it was found in the article. Limit each group’s submissions to four nouns and four verbs each and do not post repeated entries. After groups have finished presenting their words, you should have at least 15–20 nouns and 15–20 verbs.

The next method is writing original sentences with the nouns and verbs:

Explain that each group’s next task will be to mix and match the nouns and verbs on the word wall to create five or six original sentences using the nouns as sentence subjects and the verbs as predicates. Groups are allowed to add words and to change the forms of the words as they form their sentences as long as a form of the original noun acts as the sentence subject and a form of the original verb chosen acts as the main predicate of the sentence. For example, one group could offer the following sentence created from the sample nouns and verbs listed in this lesson: “Despite his efforts, Shakespeare always flunks

English class.” Or, groups may also play with more figurative or poetic pairings, such as: “Passion parries with chance”.

Wrap-up:

Presenting original sentences:

Have each group present one of its original sentences on the white board. After each presentation, have class members in the other groups identify the subject and predicate within the sentence. Then, depending on how far you would like to extend the grammar instruction, you could also ask students to identify those words or phrases that were added to the noun-verb pairings to enhance the sentence (e.g., adjectives, adverbs, prepositional phrases, etc.).

If students get “stuck” while evaluating a particular word in a group’s sentence presentation, it is better to use the Visual Thesaurus as a resource in determining the definition and part of speech relevant to the context of the sentence.

Extending the Lesson:

Once the teacher finds that students have fully grasped the concepts of noun, verb, and what constitutes a complete sentence, the teacher can expand this type of exercise to include additional parts of speech. For example, conduct a scavenger hunt for nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs in a particular text; create a four-columned word wall with the four word lists; and then have students use word play to create original sentences or short, short stories combining all of the four elements in an original context.

Assessment:

Check each group’s pooled lists of nouns and verbs to make sure that students correctly identified parts of speech.

Assess each group’s original sentences to see how cleverly they used the nouns and verbs on the word wall as main subjects and predicates in their own writing [9].

Conclusion. Perspectives for further investigations. As grammar is considered to be a vital part of any language, it must be taught to English learners from the very beginning of their English learning experience. That is why the notion of teaching grammar is of crucial role for every ESL teacher. Grammar itself can be easily taught and learnt through using visual methods. Furthermore, the investigation carried out in this paper can be used for further studies by ESL teachers as well as in the courses like practical grammar and methodology of teaching English.

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НАОЧНІ МЕТОДИ НАВЧАННЯ ГРАМАТИКИ В АНГЛІЙСЬКІЙ МОВІ

Роботу присвячено наочним методам навчання граматики англійської мови. Розглянуто основні труднощі, які можуть виникати в процесі викладання англійської граматики. Описано особливості навчання іноземної мови дітей і дорослих. На конкретних прикладах показано, які існують наочні методи навчання граматики англійської мови, як їх використовують і що є схожим і відмінним у викладанні граматики дітям і дорослим. Також описані наочні засоби навчання граматики дітей і дорослих.

Ключові слова: граматика, навчання, мова, методологія, підхід, наочні засоби.

НАГЛЯДНИЙ МЕТОД ОБУЧЕННЯ ГРАММАТИКЕ В АНГЛІЙСЬКОМУ ЯЗЫКЕ

Робота посвящена наглядным методам обучения грамматике английского языка. Рассмотрены основные трудности, которые могут возникать в процессе преподавания английской грамматики. Описаны особенности обучения иностранному языку детей и взрослых. На конкретных примерах показано, какие существуют наглядные методы обучения грамматике английского языка, как их используют и какие существуют сходства и различия в преподавании грамматики детям и взрослым. Также описаны наглядные пособия обучения грамматике детей и взрослых.

Ключевые слова: грамматика, обучение, язык, методология, подход, наглядные пособия.