PEDAGOGICAL GRAMMAR AS THE FRAMEWORK OF TEFL RESEARCH. PART 16. PROBLEMS OF PEDAGOGICAL GRAMMAR ORGANISATION IN TEACHING

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The article presents a comparative analysis of two approaches to teaching a foreign language in general and its grammar in particular – *acquisition* (mainly implicit learning, similar to the mastery of a first language) and *learning* (based on students' awareness of the structure and conditions of use of the grammatical structures to be learnt). As the analysis of the available publications shows, there are contradictory points of view on the relationship between *acquisition* and *learning* in the classroom teaching process, ranging from the complete denial of the usefulness of one of the above approaches to the search for the optimal ratio of elements of both methods, depending on the specific learning conditions. In the author's opinion, the problem can be practically reduced to the ratio of types of pedagogical information in the teaching process. The author distinguishes three such types (speech sample, model and rule), which differ in the degree of implicitness (speech sample is implicit, model is semi-implicit and rule is explicit). Acquisition is mainly based on the use of a speech sample as the only type of pedagogical information, while the use of rules and models is typical of teaching that focuses on understanding the structure and conditions of use of the grammatical action that is the object of acquisition. On the basis of the arguments presented in the previous parts of his series of articles, the author proposes a list of conditions favourable to effective *acquisition*, i.e. even when a speech sample is used as the only type of pedagogical information. On the other hand, the author argues that there are disadvantages of such teaching due to incomplete orientation of students as to the structure and conditions of the corresponding action. The author considers more explicit types of pedagogical information as a means of overcoming this shortcoming and explains

the differences between traditional and step-by-step methods of their application. Based on these conclusions, the paper outlines prospects for further research.

Keywords: explicitness, implicitness, learning, language patterns, model, rule, types of learning information.

Problem statement. *Introduction to the series*. Numerous research projects in teaching foreign languages, specifically in the development of grammar competence, often seem to lack a common framework to integrate them into a single area with uniform approaches, terminology and criteria. It accounts for the *current importance* of the issue under consideration.

The aim. The *object* of this part of the series is outlining the main approaches to teaching foreign language grammar, with the *subject* being the comparative analysis of the various types of pedagogical grammar organisation for its application in the classroom. Its *aim* is to outline a general approach to the solution of the abovementioned issues. This is the sixteenth (see the previous issues of this journal [4]) in a series of articles focusing on the Pedagogical Grammar issue [1], where the author, basing on the theoretical models and research data, is planning to discuss the various aspects of the problem.

An analysis of the current research and a presentation of the key material. It is widely believed that children learn languages implicitly (through acquisition), older learners explicitly (through learning), and adults can only learn languages explicitly. However, Lichtman's [10] study casts some doubt on this idea, suggesting that the bias towards explicit learning in adulthood may be at least partly an artefact of input, in this case explicit instruction. The role of input in the efficiency of acquisition has also been highlighted in several other papers [5; 13; 14].

The research [15] on pedagogical intentions when using motivational strategies provided evidence of the potential of stimulated recall for raising awareness. Jones [8] demonstrated that the awareness-raising approach encourages students to use this growing awareness to generate the kind of language that will help them to develop their own

conversational skills. According to one of the studies [7], many learners find it difficult to use the grammar rules (taught in the classroom) in communication. They may know the rules, but they may not be able to apply them when using the language. Therefore, they look for ways to combine acquisition and learning approaches, for example, by dividing the process of teaching a specific grammar item into two stages – language awareness activities and creative grammar practice [7] – trying to balance the advantages of the two models – acquisition and learning. A similar approach has been proposed within the discontinuity model [12], where students learn a grammar item twice – as the product of generation by a rule or as a modification of a template stored in memory. As it follows from the content of the previous papers in the series [4], the acquisition of a foreign language (FL) in general and the development of its grammatical mechanisms in particular is possible through the simultaneous, alternate or isolated use of the two methods, which in the framework of this series are labelled by the terms *acquisition* and *learning*. Either of these modes, when applied in the classroom, involves the use of pedagogical information (PI), i.e. the data concerning grammar phenomena, conditions and optimal ways to perform grammar actions. The PI may be carried by its types (speech sample, model and rule (algorithm), which differ from each other, among other characteristics, by the degree of explicitness, i.e. speech sample is implicit, the rule (algorithm) is explicit, while the model is somewhere in-between as compared to the previous two types of PI. Learning involves the use of several types of PI simultaneously, while acquisition is based mainly on the use of speech patterns as the only type of PI. For *acquisition* to be effective in the classroom, the PG must meet a number of requirements.

Conditions for the effectiveness of acquisition in the classroom. As mentioned above, acquisition is mainly based on a speech sample as the only type of PI. To ensure the development of FL grammar mechanisms, speech samples as a type of PI must meet a number of requirements. Based on the previous work in the series [4], it can be assumed that they should contain the features of the optimal speech environment, which corresponds to the features of the natural environment in native language acquisition (see [4]). These features are also inherent in the speech of native speakers of a FL when communicating with FL learners, as well as in the speech of teachers in the classroom when teaching a FL. Based on the analysis of these

features, speech samples (as a type of PI) should meet the following requirements: 1) be presented intensively in order to provide maximum input and create conditions for maximum intake; 2) orient the learner to the subject of communication, i.e. realise the experiential function and the thematic component of the communicative situation; 3) if possible, especially in the initial stages, provide the possibility of visual presentation of the subject of communication, which can also be seen as realising the experiential function and the thematic component.

In addition, an important task of PG is the appropriate selection of speech samples and their combinations at each stage of instruction in accordance with the goals and objectives of that stage. With a certain structuring of speech samples in the environment, it may be possible to form a predetermined set of substitution patterns in the learner's intuitive grammar. For example, in the textbook used in our experimental class (see [2]), speech samples were introduced in the following order 1) nomination (*This is a book*); 2) object properties) (*The book is blue*); 3) location (*The book is on the table*); 4) belonging (*This is John's book*); 5) future possibility (*I am going to be a doctor*); 6) physical possibility (*I can open the window*); 7) possession (*I have a book*); 8) location of a new object (*There is a book on the table*); 9) property or location of the mentioned object without naming it (*It is blue/on the table*); 10) obligation (*I have to open the window*). All the examples were practised very intensively in rigidly structured exercises (listening, imitation, substitution, transformation) before being incorporated into communicative exercises (role-plays, etc.). As shown in the papers of this series (see [4]), the analyses of the learners' speech utterances nine months after the start of the (beginners') course revealed the presence of intermediate rules – substitution patterns based on practised speech samples – in the intuitive grammar of all learners taught with this textbook. At the same time, the intuitive grammars of learners taught with differently structured material did not contain such substitution patterns (see [4]). This suggests that by changing the set of speech samples used in instruction, the configuration of the rules of learners' intuitive grammar can be regulated. Thus, the task of PG in this area is to clearly formulate a list of speech acts to be acquired at each stage of instruction and to select speech samples accordingly t ensure such acquisition. Another important task of PG is to purposefully ensure the adequate level of speech environment in the classroom. By varying the speech samples, its level can be effectively

regulated, according to the L+1 formula, which is the most effective for both the native and foreign language acquisition (see the analysis in [4]). The concept of environment includes not only the learner's speech, texts, etc. that are used during class sessions, but also the texts that learners work with at home. In the home-reading texts, specially created for our subjects and based on the textbook they were working with [2], the higher-level structures were introduced lexically before students were systematically exposed to them in actual teaching. This created prerequisites for a more effective acquisition of speech samples after their introduction in class. It is logical to assume that a PG systematically controlling the level of the speech environment in accordance with the principle outlined above should create prerequisites for the effective functioning of the mechanism of language acquisition.

When a speech sample is used as the only type of PI, the stage of initial skill development is inevitable. At this stage, learners cannot help but perform a series of identical actions aimed at automating the grammatical operations underlying the given sample. Due to their specific nature, such exercises can tend to become monotonous and, as a result, reduce the students' level of motivation, with all the consequences that this entails. To avoid this, the PG compiler should add elements of an emotional nature to the routine procedure of the speech samples. For example, our textbook [2] included grammar songs written especially for it, role plays and dramatizations of stories to be read at home, also based on the textbook material. The latter two types of exercises caused a real explosion of interest among the participants in the experiment, who even queued up to sign up to play the roles of certain characters in such stories.

To summarise what has been said in this section, to ensure the effectiveness of the acquisition mechanism in the classroom, the work of PG compilers should first of all be characterised by a comprehensive approach. They should draw up a list of speech acts to be acquired at each stage of learning. They should then select speech samples that meet the above requirements and structure them into a set of teaching materials, including both classroom and extracurricular components. Proper structuring should ensure: the formation of appropriate transition rules – substitution patterns – that allow communication at a given level; an ideal level of environment, according to the L+1 principle, that catalyses the assimilation process; favourable affective

factors through exercises with a clear emotional and communicative orientation.

Conditions for effective learning. Grammatical actions, the internalisation of which is the aim of PG, represent a type of mental action. In this respect, it seems justified to briefly review the results of psychological research on their development.

This problem has been the subject of the most detailed study in the theory of the stage-by-stage development of mental actions and concepts [6] within the framework of the theory of activity [9], where the latter was regarded as a specifically human form of active attitude to the environment, the content of which is its expedient change and transformation.

Speech activity, like any other activity, is seen as a set of actions, in this case, speech actions. The structure of the activity can be seen as a three-level hierarchy: activity – action – operation, and the relationship between the last two is very dynamic (for more details see [6]).

The development of any mental action is most effective when it is carried out along the path from its external (materialised) form to its internal form. In this case the so-called interiorisation of the action takes place, i.e. its transition from the external to the internal plan. The effectiveness of interiorisation depends on the quality of orientation in this process. The latter is understood as the degree to which an individual is aware of the structure and conditions of action performance. As a result of interiorisation, the action is performed quickly, correctly and automatically, i.e. it corresponds to the concept of automated skill in traditional terminology (or operation in the concept of stage-by-stage development theory). There are two main parts to any mental action: orientation and execution. The orientation part outlines ways and means of performing an action, and the execution part implements them [6]. An important task of action development is to provide orientation, since the success of the execution phase depends on the quality of the orientation. Depending on how thoroughly the orientation system has been developed, its different types are distinguished. The formal criterion for these types is the composition of the orientation basis of action (OB) and the way it is constructed. The OB is understood as a reference system that ensures that the learner understands the structure and conditions for performing the action to be learnt.

In the first type of orientation, the action is developed under conditions of incomplete OB. The reference points for performing a mental action are presented to the students in a concrete form, i.e. in the form of speech samples. These reference points are difficult to perceive and their selection is made by the students themselves through trial and error. The development of mental actions proceeds by checking the result. This process is characterised by slow progress, many errors, gradual crystallisation of the action. Students notice only those properties of the task that "catch the eye" [6], without distinguishing between the external properties of objects and their internal structure. The above characteristics are inherent in the learning process based on the use of a speech sample as the only type of PI, i.e. *acquisition*.

Adequate orientation is a universal principle that determines the success of any activity in general. Thus, in an experiment to determine the effectiveness of translating highly specialised English texts [11], translation students compensated for their inability to penetrate the depth of the source text content by effectively orienting themselves to the linguistic structure. On the other hand, experts in the field were unable to realise their potential in terms of their ability to understand the source texts in depth due to serious deficiencies in their orientation to the linguistic structure of the text. As a result, the specialists' translations were full of global (i.e. content-distorting) errors, while the students' translations were easily understood by specialists.

It is not enough to provide students with grammar rules to ensure adequate orientation. If such rules are given without auxiliary instructions linking them to practical skills, learning will also follow the first type of orientation, i.e. it will be ineffective. In this case, students must act in conditions of information overload and with an insufficient reference system for action performance. In addition, the stages of the introduction of theoretical knowledge and its application are isolated from each other. As a result, at best, knowledge (but not skills) is acquired.

The objective link that connects theoretical knowledge with practical skills, creating a plan to be followed, is the complete OB, which can be considered as operational knowledge, i.e. knowledge of how to perform a given action.

The second and third types of orientation are based on complete OB. The difference between them lies in the fact that in the second type the OB is given to the students by the teacher, while in the third type they

build it independently, relying on the acquired methods of determining the basic units of material and the rules of their combination [6].

Training based on the principles of the theory of stage-by-stage development makes it possible to significantly increase the potential effectiveness of foreign language learning by merging the orientation and executive phases of action and eliminating the phase of the learner's voluntary mnemonic acts (see Fig. 1).

Basic scheme of traditional learning:

CA → MA → KN → EXE → GMS

Basic scheme of learning within the stage development theory

OB EXE → KN GMS
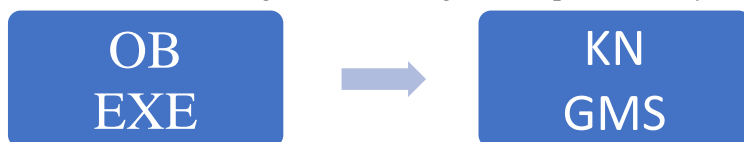
Picture 1. Comparison of the basic scheme of learning and that of the stage-by-stage development theory [Galperin, 1982]. Legend: CA – conscious analysis, MA – mnemonic actions, KN – knowledge, EXE – exercises, GMS – grammar mechanisms of speech, OB – orientation basis of action.

Рисунок 1. Порівняння базової схеми навчання з теорією поетапного розвитку [Гальперін, 1982]. Умовні позначення: СА – свідомий аналіз, МА – мнемічні дії, KN – знання, EXE – вправи, GMS – граматичні механізми мовлення, ОВ – орієнтаційна основа дії.

As can be seen from Figure 1, in traditional learning, the stage of practice and the stage of conscious analysis are separated by a stage of mnemonic acts. Following the mnemonic actions, the learner acquires knowledge which can later, if the exercises are adequate, be developed into grammatical mechanisms of speech. In the basic scheme of learning within the theory of stage-by-stage development, the learner immediately starts practising with OB, bypassing the stage of its memorisation. The latter occurs involuntarily, in the process of practising. Thus, knowledge is acquired in the process of skill development and skills are developed in the process of knowledge acquisition [6].

According to the authors of the theory of stage formation, the development of mental actions in the conditions of orientation of the second and third type is practically flawless. The action formed in such conditions is reasonable, generalised, conscious and meets the given

requirements. In the development of foreign-language skills, full orientation of the learner can be ensured by using additional (besides the speech sample) types of PI, i.e. model and rule.

The requirements for a speech sample have already been analysed above, and the ones for the rule (as a type of PI) will be formulated in a separate paper. As far as the models are concerned, the requirements to them include the correspondence to the modelling object, the ability to replace this object at certain stages of learning, the capability to provide sufficient information about the object and the availability of the rules for transition from the model to the performance of a speech action [6].

In addition, a model as a type of PI should be visual (i.e. it should allow its visual presentation); accessible (i.e. it should correspond to the level of the students' development); dynamic (i.e. it should provide the possibility of moving the model components); selective (i.e. it should focus the students' attention on the element that is currently the object of learning). The model should also be generalised and require no special efforts to memorise it. In addition, the model should offer the possibility of materialising the grammar action being formed, since this is one of the main conditions of the stage-by-stage theory. Finally, extending the requirement of generalisation outlined above, it should be noted that the model should allow for a reduction in the level of generalisation with respect to its individual elements, particularly those that are the subject of learning. For example, a model for teaching *Future Indefinite* can, depending on specific conditions, be represented by the formula $S + shall / will + V + X$, where the first and last elements (S – the subject, X – the rest of the sentence) are at the syntactic level while the second and third elements are at the morphological one. The decrease in the level of generalisation on the second and third elements is precisely because the combination of these elements is a learning objective.

Conclusion. On the basis of the above, it could be concluded that, at least in the area of grammar development, the step-by-step methodology is potentially a very effective way of *learning*. This conclusion is quite important because, despite all the shortcomings postulated by some authors, *learning* is likely to remain the principle approach to teaching FL in the classroom outside the target language country for the foreseeable future.

At the same time, the stage-by-stage theory, like any other, should not be considered dogmatic. The composition and content of the stages

of the development of mental actions can vary significantly depending on the influence of a number of factors. The results of our experiment [3] showed the dynamics of such variation depending on the interference of the mother tongue and the level of the students' speech skills. There is good reason to believe that the same dynamics may be related to the level of students' anxiety. It seems reasonable to conclude that the extension of OB in learning is appropriate in all cases where learners experience difficulties, whatever their source, because ultimately, they arise from learner entropy and OB is designed precisely to alleviate it. In any case, the influence of different factors on the degree of the learner's orientation ability in the process of acquiring FL skills needs further research.

Another reason why the results of experiments on the theory of stage-by-stage formation should be taken with a degree of caution is the fact that all the experiments on this problem known to the author of this paper were short-term. That is, they lasted a few hours at most. As mentioned in our previous contributions (see the review in [4]), subjects who are trained on the principles of *learning*, usually have an advantage in short-term courses. To establish the real relationship between *learning* and *acquisition*, it would be necessary to carry out long-term experiments, which are difficult to organise outside the country of the target language. Considering the results of all the experiments discussed in this series of papers [4], it is logical to assume that the most effective strategy might be to combine both *learning* and *acquisition* as much as possible. Ignoring one or the other leads to an incomplete use of the students' potential abilities and, consequently, to lower results (compared to the potential). Of course, the ratio of learning to acquisition can vary considerably depending on the specific learning environment and many factors, some of which have been discussed above. These factors include consideration of the psychological and vocational characteristics of learners. For example, for adult learners, *learning* is in most cases an effective strategy, all the more so because it suits their psychological make-up, especially if they (e.g. university students) tend to be analytical learners.

These and many other factors need to be studied in depth, which is the prospect of our further research.

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ПЕДАГОГІЧНА ГРАМАТИКА ЯК ФРЕЙМОВЕ ПОНЯТТЯ ДЛЯ ДОСЛІДЖЕНЬ У ГАЛУЗІ МЕТОДИКИ НАВЧАННЯ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ. ЧАСТИНА 16. ПРОБЛЕМИ ОРГАНІЗАЦІЇ ПЕДАГОГІЧНОЇ ГРАМАТИКИ У НАВЧАННІ

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У статті подано порівняльний аналіз двох підходів до навчання іноземної мови загалом та її граматики зокрема – «засвоєння» (переважно імпліцитне навчання, схоже на оволодіння першою мовою) та «навчання» (що спирається на усвідомлення учнями структури й умов уживання граматичних структур, які засвоюються). Як випливає з аналізу наявних публікацій, на співвідношення «засвоєння» і «навчання» в навчальному процесі в класі існують суперечливі точки зору, діапазон яких коливається від повного заперечення доцільності одного зі згаданих підходів до пошуків оптимального співвідношення елементів обох методів, залежно від конкретних умов навчання. На погляд автора, проблема практично зводиться до співвідношення типів навчальної інформації в процесі навчання. Виокремлюються три таких типи (мовленнєвий зразок, модель та правило), які розрізняються за ступенем імпліцитності (мовленнєвий зразок – імпліцитний, модель – напівімпліцитний, а правило – експліцитний типи). «Засвоєння» ґрунтується переважно на використанні мовленнєвого зразка як єдиного типу навчальної інформації, тоді як використання правил і моделей характерно для навчання, що орієнтується на усвідомлення структури й умов

уживання граматичної дії, яка є об'єктом оволодіння. Спираючись на аргументи, викладені у попередніх частинах своєї серії статей, автор пропонує перелік умов, сприятливих для ефективного «засвоєння», тобто навіть при використанні мовленнєвого зразка як єдиного типу навчальної інформації. З іншого боку, аргументуються недоліки такого навчання, пов'язані з неповним орієнтуванням учнів щодо структури та умов виконання відповідної дії. Засобами подолання цього недоліку автор уважає більш експліцитні типи навчальної інформації, пояснюючи відмінності між традиційними та поетапними методами їх застосування. Виходячи з висновків, окреслюються перспективи подальших досліджень.

Ключові слова: *експліцитність, засвоєння, імпліцитність, мовленнєвий зразок, модель, навчання, правило, типи навчальної інформації.*

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