

VISUALIZATION METHOD OF EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE GRAMMAR COMMUNICATIVE TEACHING IN A NON-LINGUISTIC UNIVERSITY

E. Chirkova, E. Chernovets, E. Zorina

*Saint Petersburg State University of Architecture and Civil Engineering
(RUSSIAN FEDERATION)*

Abstract

The purpose of the article is to prove the effectiveness of using pedagogical cues in the form of comic strips / NLP graphics / color when learning the grammar of the English language. The result of the experiment proved that grammatical rules are comprehended easier, faster and more effectively if pedagogical visualized cues are used when memorizing the material. The methodology for teaching grammar with the use of comic books was developed and theoretically grounded, methodological materials for teaching grammar to students of technical higher education institutions were developed with the focus on the analytical mindset of the audience for which the proposed method is intended. The leading method of research was the visualization of educational material. The analysis of the proposed methodology results has shown that the learning of grammatical structures using the visualization method increases the motivation of students, makes the learning process creative and promotes the development of the students' creative abilities.

Keywords: grammar, educational process, pedagogical cues, visualization, learning, comic strip.

1 INTRODUCTION

Assuming that students of technical colleges mostly have an analytical mindset, one can assert that their reflexive ability is characterized by a rigid logical structure. The analytical mindset is related to associative memory, the ability to create analogies, the ease of working with algorithms or formulae, as well as to the ability to integrate the information received from different areas of knowledge [10].

The present paper takes into account the fact that scientists refer to [3; 8; 14] the idea that the analytical mindset allows a person to analyze in detail various situations, presenting them as a clear holistic image.

Teaching grammar, which is a unity of several systems and subsystems, can be a challenging object of study, because the grammar of each language is arranged in its own way. Different languages have different grammatical categories, which differ not only in grammatical notions, but also in the way these notions are expressed. This means that it can be difficult to study. But the difficulties can be overcome through the use of various methods, including the use of pedagogical cues in the form of comic strips. It is easier to establish an association between the grammatical phenomenon and the visual image (comics) for students who are able to analyze and whose thinking process is based on the logic of reasoning, when the student can transform information using the inference rules (grammar phenomenon ↔ picture / image / comics ↔ concept). The result is an idea that is memorized in the form of a structure that establishes the relationship between the symbols (in direct or figurative meaning).

The teaching of grammar has always been in the focus of foreign language teachers [17; 22; 26]. The English grammar methodologist Penny Ur says "there is no doubt that an explicit or implicit knowledge of grammar rules is the basis for language proficiency" [30, p. 4].

In the currently dominating communicative approach to teaching, grammar is considered only as a means or a tool for developing speech skills and abilities: grammatical phenomena are studied and assimilated as means of expressing certain ideas, communicative intentions of the speaker and extracting information from the speech act [30].

The teaching of a professionally focused foreign language (such a learning paradigm dominates the teaching of foreign languages in technical education institutions) involves the development and improvement of speech skills through the accumulation of an active and passive lexical minimum, and the means for grammatical processing of linguistic material. New directions in the teaching of grammar are being developed since the functioning of any type of speech activity is impossible without a

grammatical basis. Linguistic competence, which includes mastering the grammar of the language being studied, is one of the most important components of communicative competence.

The goal of learning grammar, according to I.L. Bim [2], consists in teaching oral speech with concentration on the content of the utterance and the recognition of the grammatical forms while reading and listening with the focus on extracting information. To achieve this goal it is necessary to consider teaching grammar in a technical education institution not as a goal of teaching a professionally-oriented foreign language, but as a means of mastering speech skills.

2 METHODOLOGY

One of the methods for teaching grammar involves the use of pedagogical cues as certain guidelines that motivate students to concentrate their attention on the essential, eliminating the uncertainty, which leads to the reduction of the number of mistakes. Elements of NLP graphics (arrows, highlighting, font, color) and comics, which are closely related to infographics in the form of using visual communication tools, can be used as such a pedagogical cues.

The definition of the comics and its place in the learning process is given in the research of E.E. Anisimova: "a creolized text is a complex text formation in which verbal and non-verbal elements form one visual, structural, semantic and functional whole, aimed at a complex impact on the addressee" [1, p. 8]. This definition helps to define comics both as a mixed pedagogical cue and as a kind of creolized text.

Brent Wilson agrees that using comics is a way to cross the borders between visual culture and the classroom [32]. This genre is interesting for students; the vocabulary is not complex, comics are easy to read and understand. Comics can initiate a wide range of interdisciplinary discussions and direct students' work on various issues. Comics is also a tool that helps teachers to work with inactive students [11; 31; 33]. The most important moments in training are related to the fact that comics create opportunities for teachers to involve students in important discussions, for example, about visual perception, writing, history of the language, etymology of words and the content of texts at different levels [20].

So, the optimal solution to all the problems discussed above can be found in the assumption that the process of forming a foreign communicative competence in a technical education institution should be carried out using less grammatical material than presented in grammatical reference books, i.e. using the selected grammatical minimum. Zh. L. Vitlin [4, p.108] speaks about the need to reduce the amount of general grammar terminology as compared with the information contained in the grammar reference books.

A different point of view is expressed by L.A. Yasyukova. According to the researcher, the main thing in the educational process is the development of conceptual thinking, which stimulates the development of various abilities (linguistic, mathematical, etc.) [19]. L.A. Yasyukova believes that the study of a foreign language must begin with a full course of grammar, the basis of which is the formation of concepts. When a student, while solving problems or performing various exercises, uses formulas and rules, then he or she establishes their connections with concepts, defines the scope of their application and specifies their meaning. Only then symbols and words are filled with meaning. That is why first goes the study of conceptual grammatical material, and then its practical use [18]. This process was called by L.S. Vygotsky [5; 6] the concept development law.

The authors of the present article share the view of Zh. L. Vitlin and other researchers [7, p. 177] about the need to study less grammar material than is given in the grammar reference books. This is due, above all, to the scarcity of study hours, traditionally devoted in non-linguistic technical universities to foreign language classes.

The use of pedagogical cues (signs, geometric shapes, highlighting, the use of different colors and fonts, and text boxes) makes the learning process both cognitive and interesting. Foreign methodists [25; 28; 29] believe that the use of such mixed cues as comics contributes to the development of critical thinking, and is a trigger for the formation of grammatical skills.

The need to take into account the fact that most young people now have so-called "clip" thinking led to the creation of a number of grammar textbooks that lack detailed rules and where explanations are given in the form of funny drawings and comic strips [9; 12; 16; 23; 24; 27].

3 RESULTS

Comics can serve both as a source of grammar knowledge, and as a basis for doing grammar exercises. For example, typical tasks might be to fill in speech bubbles, restore a dialogue, or restore the storyline. The authors of the present paper have conducted an experiment on using comics as a pedagogical tool for teaching grammar. The participants of the experiment were two mixed male and female groups, one of which was a control group, and the other an experimental group (total of 57 people).

All the work on the comic was conducted according to the method described by Brian Boyd in the webinar "Using comics and superheroes to teach grammar" from Macmillan [21]. In Boyd's view, there are 3 stages of the process:

- Stage 1 Getting started (Generating the interest. Introducing the project).
- Stage 2 Initial ideas (Research. Feedback. Creating the characters and their world).
- Stage 3 Making the comic (Scripting and storyboarding. Drafting and redrafting. Making and publishing the finished pages).

A survey of the members of the experimental group showed that they liked the task and they would like to see it as the form of a creative educational contest. In addition, at the stage of feedback, all possible problems that could arise, according to Brian Boyd, in the process of creation were discussed [20; 21] (e.g. wrong order of replies in the dialogue; very short text; too many panels on the page; simplified English, etc.).

In both groups, the same control test was carried out, consisting of two parts: the first - the text, and the second - the comics. As a result of the analysis, it was revealed that the total score for the test in the experimental group was 21% higher than in the control group, while with the second part (containing the comics), both groups coped better than with the first.

A week later the test was repeated and revealed that the actualization of knowledge in the experimental group was 17% higher, which makes it possible to make a conclusion about the advisability of using such a mixed medium as educational comics.

Initially, when dividing the participants into a control and experimental group, the representative systems of the students were not taken into account, although according to the well-known methodologist Jeremy Harmer [25] this is very important for a full-fledged educational process. Working with the comic book helps to fully interact with students with any way of information perception. Thus, for kinesthetic learners it is easier to work with tools not on the computer, while auditory learners also act out the proposed dialogues or listen to the text. Perhaps, it was the lack of diversity of information perception channels (which better presented in the comics) that prevented the control group from successfully solving the proposed tasks.

Thus, according to M.M. Murtazaeva [15, p. 11], comics can be considered not only a mixed pedagogical cue, but also a progressive means of teaching foreign grammar, because comics are graphic and other images that are combined in a certain way, designed to convey information and / or to evoke in the viewer (reader) an aesthetic response [13, p. 9]. A visual form of representation simplifies the perception of the information, which is important at the first stage of learning. Then the used pedagogical cues should be changed or removed, so as not to become redundant, not allowing the student to independently construct phrases, sentences, and texts in a foreign language.

The use of comics in teaching the grammatical side of speech serves two purposes: presentation of the grammatical form of the phenomenon being studied and demonstrating its use in speech. Thus, the principle of communicative methodology is realized: grammatical phenomena are studied and learned not as abstract structures, but as means of expressing one's own ideas during the formation of speaking and writing skills, as well as means of recognizing the grammar forms when reading and listening to texts created by other authors.

Since the study of grammar in a non-linguistic technical university is subordinated to the task of forming the skills and abilities of all types of professional speech activity, this process must be built with the focus on the selected lexical material. This leads to the use of a limited number of pedagogical cues from modern grammar textbooks, since they are developed on the basis of general vocabulary.

The authors of the present paper believe that educational grammatical comics can become not only a popular mixed pedagogical cue, but also a useful tool that increases the educational motivation and speed of the formation of knowledge, skills and abilities.

4 CONCLUSION

Thus, the study of grammar in a non-linguistic technical education institution should be regarded as one of the means of forming a foreign communicative competence. The study should be subject only to a carefully selected grammatical minimum. The use of pedagogical cues in the study of grammar has made it possible to reduce the time for memorizing grammar structures by 10%, to increase the motivation and activity of students, to diversify and facilitate the learning of the grammar structures of a foreign language, as well as to contribute to a deeper understanding of the grammatical phenomenon studied, as shown by the experiment. This effect was achieved by the use of the visualization method in the form of comics, elements of NLP graphics and color. The application of the method described in the article made it possible for students to develop strong grammar skills serving the communicative purposes of instruction.

REFERENCES

- [1] Anisimova, E.E. Linguistics of the text and intercultural communication (on the basis of creolized texts). M.: Academia, 2003. 128 p.
- [2] Bim, I.L. Theory and Practice of Teaching German in High School: Problems and Prospects. Moscow: Enlightenment, 1988. 256 p.
- [3] Vesnina, T. What is your mentality? // Green Mama: URL: <http://www.greenmama.ru/nid/2207139/> (reference date: January 12, 2013).
- [4] Vitlin, J.L. Learning adults in a foreign language. Questions of theory and practice. M.: Pedagogy, 1978. 165 p.
- [5] Vygotsky, L.S. Collection of works in 6 volumes, vol.2, Moscow, 1982. 504 p.
- [6] Vygotsky, L.S. Collection of works in 6 volumes, vol.3, Moscow, 1983. 369 p.
- [7] Gez, I.I., Lyakhovitskii, M.V., Mirolubov, A.A., Folomkina, S.K., Shatilov, S.F. Method of teaching foreign languages in secondary school. M., 1992. 412 p.
- [8] Demchenko, E. Distinctive features of students of technical universities. // TM student. URL: <http://tmstudent.ru/article/otlichitelnyie-chertyi-studenta-tehnicheskogo-vuza>. (reference date: January 15, 2013).
- [9] Dubrovin, M.I. Illustrated guide to English grammar. Express course. M: Start-Press, 1992. 224 p.
- [10] Zorina, E.M., Chirkova, E.I. The use of pedagogical supports in reading for the development of algorithmic thinking. // Perspectives of Science, No. 1, 2018, pp. 105-111.
- [11] Kapustina, A.A., Dikov, A.V. Training of information security with the help of comics. // Publishing house "Education and Informatics": URL: <http://infojournal.ru/product-informational-safety/> (reference date: 01/12/2018).
- [12] Klementeva, T.B., Monk, B. Happy English. Book. 1. Textbook. for grades 5-6. Moscow: Education, 1993. 416 p.
- [13] McCloud, S. Understanding the comics. Invisible art. M.: White apple, 2016. 216 p.
- [14] Malysheva, A.D. Influence of the type of personality and thinking on the educational activity of students (on the example of learning foreign languages) // Pedagogy and Psychology: Trends and Development Prospects / Collection of proceedings on the results of the international scientific-practical conference №3, Volgograd, 2016, 125 p., pp.76-79
- [15] Murtazaeva, M.M. Modern methods and technologies of teaching foreign language and literature in school and university: monograph / [Murtazaeva M.M., etc.] Volkhov: Izd-vo Lema, 2012. 78 p.
- [16] Popovets, M.A. English in comics. M: Eksmo, 2015. 320 p.
- [17] Porshneva, E.R., Grammatical concepts and methods for constructing them in the study of a foreign language (on the material of foreign studies) / E.R. Porshneva, O.V. Spiridonova // Foreign languages at school. 2008. No. 6. pp. 73-77.
- [18] Yasyukova, L.A. Regularities of the development of conceptual thinking and its role in teaching. SPb.: IMATON, 2005. 256 p.

- [19] Yasyukova, L.A. The role of conceptual thinking in teaching // Bulletin of Practical Psychology of Education, No. 1 (2), January-March, 2005, p. 22-29. Berkowitz, J., Packer, T. Heroes in the classroom: Comic books in art education. / The Journal of Art Education, 2001, 54(6), pp.12-18. ref num: 142424-LLP-1-2008-1-GR-COMENIUS-CMP.
- [20] Boyd, Brian. Using Comics & Superheroes to Teach Grammar. [Macmillan Education ELT Webinar]. URL: <https://youtu.be/GrUbpvSTzTk>. (reference date 15.01.2018).
- [21] Boyd, Brian. Using Comics and Superheroes to teach grammar // Macmillan English: URL: <http://www.macmillanenglish.com/events/using-comics-to-teach-grammar/> (reference date 15.01.2018).
- [22] Davis, F., Rimmer, W. Active Grammar. Level 1. Withanswer. Cambridge University Press, 2012, 200p.
- [23] Eckersley, C. E. Essential English for foreign students. 1992 336 p.
- [24] Grammarman Comic: URL: <http://grammarmancomic.com>
- [25] Harmer, J. The Practice of English Language Teaching. Longman, 2015, 446p.
- [26] Le Nouveau Sans Frontières 1. Nouvelle Edition / Dominique P., Girardet J., Verdelhan M., Verdelhan M. CLE International, 2002, 224p.
- [27] Oliveri, D. Cartoon Drawing in the Classroom: Ways to Use Cartoons in Teaching. // URL: http://homeschool-curricula.suite101.com/article.cfm/cartoon_drawing_in_the_classroom (reference date 15.01.2018).
- [28] Spitalnik, I. Cartoons in the Classroom. // URL: <http://s3.amazonaws.com/powtoon/books/Cartoons-in-the-Classroom-Book.pdf> (reference date 15.01.2018).
- [29] Thornbury, S. How to Teach Grammar. Edinburgh: Pearson, 1999. 189p.
- [30] Ur, P. Grammar Practice Activities. A practical guide for teachers. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999, 148 p.
- [31] Williams, R. Image, Text, and Story: Comics and Graphic Novels in the Classroom. Art education, 2008: Nov. pp. 13-19.
- [32] Wilson, B. More lessons from the superheros of J.C. Holtz: The visual culture of childhood and the third pedagogical site [Electronic version]. Art Education. 2005, 58(6), pp.18-24, 33-34.
- [33] Wright, G., Sherman, R. Let's create a comic strip. Reading Improvement, 1999, 36(2), pp. 66-72. Ref. num. 507642053

The origins of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) are to be found in the changes in the British language teaching tradition dating late 1960s. Until then, situation of Language Teaching represented the major British approach to teaching English as foreign language. In situational language teaching, language was taught by practicing basic structure in meaningful situation-based activities. Other difficulties cited included grammar based examinations, insufficient funding and lack of support. The Post- Method Era. Good teaching is regarded as correct use of the method and it s prescribed principles and techniques. Roles of teachers and learners, as well as the type of activities and teaching techniques to be used in the classroom are generally prescribed.