# Selection and Organization of Grammatical Material

**PhD. Sarah Smith***
*University of Manitoba, Canada*

**Abstract**

*Grammar is the area of the language where the level of proficiency in the above-mentioned skills is most clearly manifested. Grammar is also the structure of language and turns it into speech. The study of the grammatical aspect is inevitable when mastering a foreign language. But, in turn, mastering the grammar of any language causes many difficulties, which are aggravated by grammatical terms, rules and an infinite number of exceptions. All this usually does not cause delight among most students of educational institutions.*

***Key Words:*** *grammar, grammatical minimum, material, methodological value, methodological literature.*

For practical purposes of teaching a foreign language in secondary school, the task of teaching grammar is to form students' grammatical skills in productive and receptive types of speech activity within the grammatical minimum defined by the programs.

The communicative purpose of grammar teaching in secondary school allows us to formulate the main requirement for the volume of grammatical material to be assimilated in secondary school: it must be sufficient for using the language as a means of communication within the limits set by the program and real for mastering it in these conditions.

The need to limit linguistic, including grammatical, material is due to the following objective factors.

In the conditions of secondary school, there is no real opportunity for students to master the entire grammatical structure of this particular foreign language due to its vastness and the difficulty of forming grammatical skills.

Recently, the point of view has become widespread, according to which special importance is attached to involuntary memorization of grammatical phenomena in speech, which allegedly makes purposeful and special work on grammatical phenomena unnecessary.

In this case, there is an unlawful identification of two processes: memorization and mastery of grammatical phenomena. Memorization is one of the stages of mastering; the latter is possible only as a result of special, purposeful training.

If we keep in mind that the creation of grammatical skills involves spending a significant amount of time to perform exercises, then it is unlikely to master all the phenomena of a foreign language to the extent of automated use of them in the conditions of school teaching a foreign language. Certain, very significant restrictions are necessary in the selection of grammatical material and, above all, those grammatical phenomena that students should actively master — in productive and receptive types of speech activity.

Overestimation of the volume of actively assimilated grammatical material, as practice shows, has a negative effect on the quality of its possession: students are not sufficiently proficient in the most elementary phenomena of morphology and syntax.

The restriction of grammatical material and its selection for certain communicative purposes is facilitated by the fact that the language has a widely developed system of synonymy at all its levels, which generates redundancy, "entropy", while, as noted in the scientific literature, with all the richness of the language, only an insignificant, most commonly used part of it is the most necessary and sufficient. Therefore, it is possible and advisable to limit the amount of material, in particular grammatical, taking into account the specific conditions of teaching a foreign language [1].

The methodological literature has developed the basic principles of the selection of the grammatical minimum.

The active grammatical minimum includes those phenomena that are absolutely necessary for productive types of speech activity.

The main generally accepted principles of selection in the active grammatical minimum are:

1) the principle of prevalence in oral speech,

2) the principle of excellence,

3) the principle of exclusion of synonymous phenomena.

The main principles of the selection of grammatical phenomena in the passive minimum include:

1) the principle of prevalence in the book-written style of speech;

2) the principle of ambiguity.

Grammatical material should be organized functionally, i.e. so that grammatical phenomena are organically combined with lexical ones in communicative units with a volume of at least a sentence [2].

Some methodologists distinguish between a language model and its speech embodiment — speech models. The latter are nothing more than a communicative and situational implementation of a language model in a specific situation of speech communication. Since speech is always either situational or contextual, unlike the language model, it is always logically and intonationally defined. A speech model or a speech pattern differs from a language model, firstly, by a specific situational or contextual lexical content, secondly, by logical stress and rhythmic-intonation pattern due to the type of sentence (narrative, motivational), thirdly, by a specific morphological design of sentence members in accordance with the norms of this language.

The special methodological value of the speech sample is that it organically combines various aspects of the language—grammatical, lexical, phonetic (in oral speech) or graphic (in writing) — into a ready-to-use speech whole, namely a sentence in accordance with the norms of the language being studied and relieves students from the need to construct it according to the rules and based on a translation from the native language, which often does not provide an error-free construction due to the discrepancy in the linguistic design of the same thought in the native and foreign languages. But it is impossible not to point out the negative consequences of the purely structural organization of language material when teaching monologue and dialogic speech. Such a structural-functional approach to the organization of grammatical material can be defined more precisely as a formal-structural approach, which ignores such qualities of speech as means of communication, as its logical-semantic (thematic, plot, etc.) coherence. With this approach, vocabulary plays a service role in mastering syntactic structures or speech patterns, it is a substitute material for filling these structures that are not related to each other communicatively, i.e. in logical and semantic terms [3].

There is another extreme approach in the methodology — a lexical (or thematic, situational) approach to the organization of language material, which manifests itself in the fact that at the very beginning they teach meaningful, communicative, full-fledged (natural) speech. At the same time, the grammatical aspect of speech

"dissolves" into the lexical one, and therefore the grammatical correctness of speech is determined by random factors, for example, the nature of involuntary memorization, which is different for different students.

One of the main problems of the organization and sequence of the study of grammatical material is the methodically expedient combination of two sides of speech — substantive (primarily lexical) and grammatical (formal).

In the methodological literature, there is an attempt to solve the problem of teaching formal and substantive aspects of speech by a step—by-step sequence of mastering the material in a complex organization: at the first — structural-thematic - stage, students master new grammatical material on previously studied, thematically related vocabulary. At the second — thematically-structural stage, the main attention is paid to the new vocabulary on the topic based on previously learned structures. It is quite possible to introduce a certain amount of new grammatical material. At the third — intertemic — stage, conditions are created for the creative and correct recombination of previously learned and studied lexical and grammatical material in oral and written speech in intertemic communication situations.

Methodically unjustified are three extreme tendencies in solving the problem of the relationship between grammatical and lexical aspects in the complex when organizing the material:

1) underestimating the importance of the complex organization of language material (vocabulary and grammar are studied separately from each other);

2) ignoring the features of grammatical and lexical aspects of the language in their complex study;

3) orientation to any one (grammatical or lexical) aspect of the language with formal observance of the complex [4].

A unilateral solution to this problem makes it difficult for students to learn foreign languages as a full-fledged means of communication.

As already noted, the organization of grammatical material is important for the formation of grammatical skills included in the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Thus, at the structural and thematic-structural stages, favorable conditions are created for the formation of syntactic skills both at the level of individual structures and at the level of coherent, elementary dialogical and monological speech due to the fact that it allows you to purposefully train sentence structures not only individually, but also in thematic connection with each other. The intertemic stage has a positive effect on the formation and improvement of speech (monological and dialogical) skills, as well as reading skills and untranslated understanding of coherent texts.

**References**

[1]. C.J. Brumfit, K. Johnson "The Communicative Approach in Language Teaching", Oxford Univ.press, 1991.

[2]. J.Harmer " Teaching and Learning Grammar", Longman Group UK Limited 1987.

[3]. L. Hashemi with Raymond Murphy "English Grammar in Use". Supplementary Exercises, CUP 1995.

[4]. J.Shepheard " The Anti-Grammar Grammar Book", Longman UK, 1992.