

Секція: Міжкультурна комунікація

## **STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES OF DEVELOPING THE GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCE OF EFL LEARNERS**

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## **СТРАТЕГІЇ ТА ТЕХНІКИ РОЗВИТКУ ГРАМАТИЧНИХ КОМПЕТЕНЦІЙ ПРИ ВИВЧЕННІ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЯК ІНОЗЕМНОЇ**

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**Introduction.** A constant development and euro-integrational political course of Ukraine predetermine the necessity of constant changes in Ukrainian education. The visual, auditory, kinesthetic model demonstrates a great example of students-centered learning, which is based on considering both physical and psychological inborn modalities of a student.

Taking into account a high popularity of the VAK model in the European education and its flexibility, ever more attention should be given to implementation of this learning style into class to provide a variety of learning activities for learners and, thus, to motivate them to master foreign languages.

Despite the vast majority of works analyzing the VAK model, little attention has been given to the study of its strategies and techniques in order to develop a specific competence of EFL learners.

**The aim of the article is** to provide the practical guidelines for implementing the VAK individual learning style with developing grammatical competence of the EFL learners at schools taking into consideration their inborn psychological and physiological modalities.

**Results and discussion.** The VAK model is a learning style that combines three sensory modalities, namely seeing, listening and moving to absorb information and knowledge, which helps learners to simplify learning. This style of learning was firstly introduced by a psychologist and teacher W. Barb, who established that if a teacher takes into account learners' modality strengths, the adoption of new information and academic progress are more efficient and intensive.

The VAK model is highly popular, because of its simplicity and clarity. The variety of the activities offered, active engagement of the learners into learning and its simple implementing constitute the advantages of this learning style. However, efficient implementing of the VAK model requires consideration of all the peculiarities of information perceiving by learners.

Auditory learners are always willing to take part in discussions and prefer reading texts aloud. Noise is the biggest obstacle for them as it hinders from concentrating on a new material. While working with auditory learners it might be useful to 1) work in small groups; 2) use different songs or poems for better memorizing; 3) provide activities aimed at discussion and solving a problem; 4) use brainstorming [2, p. 104] which fosters forming and airing own views.

Visuals are usually calm and do not like being actively engaged into studying. They have vivid imagination and non-standard way of thinking. To motivate them it is

advised to: 1) explain new notions by using associations or demonstrating charts; 2) use images, diagrams or illustrations; 3) match new terms with the notions or illustrations [3, p. 34].

Kinesthetic learners are full of energy and prefer to touch, move, and interact with their environment. It is highly recommended to: 1) use dancing, drawing, making up charts; 2) focus on practical work rather than theory; 3) use card games and board. The main constituents of the grammatical competence are improving a learner's knowledge of grammar. A grammatical skill forming takes the following stages: 1) preparation of learners to a new material; 2) presentation of a new material in the context and its semantization; 3) control of understanding; 4) mastering and repeating new material in the speech; 5) the fluent of a new grammatical structure.

During the first stage learners get acquainted with a new grammatical structure use in a definite situation or context [1, p. 19]. This can be a short story, poem, video or song. To engage learners, it is important to represent the information through both video and audio. Dialogues are considered the best for all modes learners because roleplaying the dialogue will engage auditory, visual and kinesthetic learners simultaneously. However, the stage of new grammar representing should be also aimed at emphasizing of using it on daily basis.

The next stage of mastering a new grammatical skill is semantization. On this stage a teacher explains functioning of a new grammatical structure in a foreign language.

For visual learners it is always efficient to use various charts, tables or images while explaining. It is reasonable to use a visual presentation as an additional tool, if the material is difficult. All visual aids should also provide learners with easy and clear examples of using a grammatical structure in everyday speech.

In order to simplify learning for auditory learners, a teacher should comment on all visual aids. If learners study a foreign language for a long time, they can be asked to make up their own examples with the grammatical structure.

After representing a new material, a teacher has to make sure that learners have understood it. The assessment stage requires implementation of the various receptive

activities, i.e. tasks aimed at recognizing and analyzing the new grammatical structure in a context.

An example of the efficient activity on this stage for visual learners is completing a chart with some rules or examples of using grammatical structure. Another appropriate task is to identify correct statements or sentences with the grammatical structure.

The tasks, where learners should choose the correct variant is an appropriate alternative for auditory learners as well. The only difference is that learners work in groups or pairs. The usual discussion of grammatical material is also an effective way to engage this type of learners.

However, in order to help understand new material for kinesthetic learners, it is crucial to use active games or exercises, for example, recognizing the correct usage of a grammatical structure in a sentence. If the sentence is correct, they signal by raising or clapping their hands.

The next stage is involuntary usage of the new grammatical material. This stage presupposes reproductive tasks to enable learners to use a new structure on daily basis. Making up own sentences with a new grammatical structure according to a definite pattern are the best for the auditory learners [1, p. 22]. They should be based on real life situations, e.g. to tell what is in your school bag using correct articles. The more complicated tasks include answering questions using the correct grammatical structure. They should engage learners to share their own experience or express their own point of view.

Visual learners are used to work with prepared beforehand tasks or do exercises from their textbook. The examples of visual receptive activities on this stage can be explaining the difference between sentences with a new grammatical structure or explaining why it is used in this context. Another type of visual activities are matching exercises, which include matching the rules with the examples, sentence and its translation, completing texts with a correct grammatical form, etc. One of the most popular tasks for visual learners are transformational activities, which are usually used while working on tense forms, e.g. to replace one tense form with the other, use the

correct tense form in the text. As for the reproductive visual activities, the most effective are describing the picture or making up a story using a range of pictures.

Active games are recommended for kinesthetic learners, as they help relax from the monotonous activity and, thus, raise learner's concentration. The examples of grammatical active games can be found in the Internet, on such web-sites as *ESLkids*, *ESL Fun Games online* and *TEFL*.

An interesting example of the game for all kinds of modalities is found in the book by Peter Barrows "Creative approach to teaching grammar". Despite that this activity seems to be visual at the first sight (describing the picture), it offers different approaches to performing it (depending on different modes). Thus, visuals describe what they see, auditory learners – possible sounds which they could hear if they appeared on the place depicted in the picture, and kinesthetic learners – the feelings which are caused by the picture. The last stage implies free use of the new grammatical structures. The assessment of grammar skills is easily done with the help of the tests.

**Conclusion.** The study has shown that the VAK learning model is one of the simplest but at the same time the efficient learning style as it takes into account student-centered approach. Obviously, even learning grammar, which is considered to be boring, can be interesting, informative and motivating if we consider all the stages while working on new grammatical skill and offer both reproductive and receptive tasks for learners with different modalities.

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