

SOME ISSUES IN USING THE TRANSFORMATIONAL METHOD FOR TEACHING ENGLISH TO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Language learning methods and language teaching methods should not be isolated from each other. One of the methods for studying syntactic structures is the transformational analysis, which, according to Z. Harris, in whose work the transformational rules were first introduced, is to a greater extent an algebraic method for analyzing the language structure than other methods – the distributive method, the direct component analysis method, etc. Transformational analysis emerged from the needs of applied linguistics, especially for the needs of creating machine translation algorithms. The founders' approach has defined a widespread understanding of transformation as any transformation of a linguistic unit performed in accordance with some predetermined rules. Sometimes transformation is also understood as a translation inside one language, that is, the translation of one word or a combination of words of the given language into another word or a combination of the words of the same language.

Using the general provisions in the practice of teaching foreign languages, the transformational grammar can be represented as a set of rules for the transformation of the syntactic structures of the language under study, based on knowledge of the rules for transforming the syntactic structures of the native language. Here we have in essence a structural comparison of the two languages, which represents the structural features of the language under study through the prism of the student's native language.

The transformational method ought to deal not only with what must be studied, but also with what need not be studied. In the transformation of forms from one language to another, there is a tendency to transfer from it to another many of the habits of automatic modeling of sentences, which are part of the linguistic intuition of the student. These habits acquired through the use of the system, which is the native language, and, being limited by this system, are incompatible with the English language system. Hence, the transformational grammar seeks not only to supplement, but also to modify certain processes and structural characteristics of the system of the native language of the student by indicating their incompatibility with the structural integrity of the new system of the English language. The transformational method seeks to give the student a picture of English in such a way that he or she would use a series of features inherent in their native language to study it.

Automatic skills are most likely to be transferred from one language to another in the syntax and phonetics area. In the syntax, this is explained by the fact that little attention is paid to words, phrases and sentences as interdependent parts of a single structural whole that are in certain relations to each other and limited by certain environments. One of the main goals of applying the transformational method in the teaching process is to demonstrate and bring to the student the understanding of the relationship between the elements of the formal structural system of the language so that the student understands that he or she should not learn the translation, but master the operations to generate syntactic structures within the English language, using their native language as a starting point.

Lots of drawbacks in practical teaching foreign languages are explained by the desire to simplify this process. This simplification leads to the fact that the student receives a stock of words, but does not know how to use them. It's not enough to talk about Conditional, Subjunctive mood, etc.; the teacher should explain the basis on which such concepts are based. And this basis is structural.

Other drawbacks are also explained by the fact that the student is not informed of the facts of the structural arrangement and the relationships of elements within the structure of the language, without which the picture of this language turns out to be incomplete. These facts should be presented to the student with the briefest scheme of formal structures, so that he or she, from his own linguistic experience, operated simple structures of the English language and formed more complex ones from them.

Transformation operations are established in relation to those environments in which there are relevant structures of both languages. For a student, formal criteria as such do not have or have very little value. With the material of his or her native language, the student mainly operates it in such a way that it means something for them within the limits of the structural constraints imposed on them by the characteristic features of the language system of their native language. And precisely in this light, the transformational grammar seeks to present to the student the facts of the English language which he or she wishes to study. It also seems possible to apply the method both to word-formation and to study of the types of lexical meaning of word.

The above considerations outline one of the ways in which the transformational method can be used to teach foreign languages in higher education. It is probably too early to make any prognosis, but no doubt, the methods of study and the methods of teaching the language should not be isolated.