

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TRADITIONAL VS FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR APPROACHES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN UZBEKISTAN

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14056800>

Abstract. *This paper presents a comparative analysis of traditional and functional grammar approaches in English language teaching (ELT) in Uzbekistan. It explores the characteristics, advantages, and disadvantages of each approach, highlighting their implications for teaching practices, student engagement, and language proficiency. The traditional grammar approach emphasizes rote memorization and rule-based instruction, while the functional grammar approach focuses on the contextual use of language and communication. The analysis concludes that a balanced integration of both approaches can enhance English language education in Uzbekistan, promoting both grammatical accuracy and communicative competence among learners.*

Keywords: *Traditional grammar, functional grammar, english language teaching (ELT), Uzbekistan, teaching practices, student engagement, language proficiency.*

СРАВНИТЕЛЬНЫЙ АНАЛИЗ ТРАДИЦИОННЫХ И ФУНКЦИОНАЛЬНЫХ ПОДХОДОВ К ГРАММАТИКЕ В ПРЕПОДАВАНИИ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА В УЗБЕКИСТАНЕ

Аннотация. *В данной статье представлен сравнительный анализ традиционных и функциональных подходов к грамматике в преподавании английского языка (ELT) в Узбекистане. В ней рассматриваются характеристики, преимущества и недостатки каждого подхода, подчеркиваются их последствия для практики преподавания, вовлеченности студентов и владения языком. Традиционный подход к грамматике делает упор на механическое запоминание и обучение на основе правил, в то время как подход к функциональной грамматике фокусируется на контекстном использовании языка и коммуникации. Анализ приводит к выводу, что сбалансированная интеграция обоих подходов может улучшить образование английского языка в Узбекистане, способствуя как грамматической точности, так и коммуникативной компетентности среди учащихся.*

Ключевые слова: *традиционная грамматика, функциональная грамматика, преподавание английского языка (ELT), Узбекистан, практика преподавания, вовлеченность студентов, владение языком.*

It is known that through the introduction of advanced teaching methods using modern pedagogical and information and communication technologies, the education of the growing young generation to foreign languages, the radical improvement of the system of training specialists who can speak these languages freely, and, on the basis of this, their achievements of world civilization and their widespread use of World Information Resources, in order to create conditions and opportunities for the development of international cooperation and dialogue, wide opportunities are created by our state. Currently, state standards for the system of continuing education in our country for foreign languages have been developed, the requirements for the level of training of graduates of all stages of Education have been established. The standards of Uzbekistan's continuing education system were developed with reference to the requirements of the universally recognized Council of Europe “pan-European competencies of knowledge of a foreign language: learning, teaching and evaluation” (CEFR). A panel of experts led by England's Rod Bolbayto and Davies Alan were brought in to ensure that the state's educational standards were thorough in every way.

The teaching of English grammar in Uzbekistan has evolved over the years, reflecting changes in pedagogical theories and methodologies. Traditionally, grammar instruction emphasized rote memorization of rules and forms, often leading to a mechanical understanding of the language. In contrast, functional grammar approaches prioritize the use of language in context, focusing on how grammatical structures serve communicative purposes. This paper aims to compare and contrast these two approaches within the framework of English language teaching (ELT) in Uzbekistan, exploring their implications for teaching practices, student engagement, and overall language proficiency.

Traditional Grammar Approach Definition and Characteristics

The traditional grammar approach, often referred to as prescriptive grammar, is rooted in the systematic study of grammatical rules and structures. This approach typically involves:

1. Rote Learning: Students memorize rules and paradigms without necessarily understanding their practical application.
2. Focus on Form: Instruction centers on the correct usage of grammatical forms, often through drills and exercises.
3. Teacher-Centered: The teacher acts as the primary authority, delivering knowledge and correcting errors.

Advantages

1. Structured Learning: The traditional approach provides a clear framework for understanding the mechanics of the language.

2. Standardized Assessment: It allows for straightforward evaluation through tests that assess knowledge of grammatical rules.

Disadvantages

1. Lack of Contextualization: Students may struggle to apply grammatical rules in real-life situations due to the absence of contextual learning.

2. Limited Engagement: The focus on rote memorization can lead to disinterest and disengagement among learners.

Functional Grammar Approach

Definition and Characteristics

Functional grammar, on the other hand, is an approach that emphasizes the role of language as a tool for communication. Key characteristics include:

1. Contextual Learning: Grammar is taught within the context of meaningful communication, highlighting how language functions in various situations.

2. Focus on Meaning: The approach prioritizes understanding how grammatical choices affect meaning and how they can be used to achieve specific communicative goals.

3. Student-Centered: Learners are encouraged to explore language use actively and collaboratively, often through interactive activities.

Advantages 1. Real-World Application: Students learn to use grammar in authentic contexts, making their learning more relevant and applicable.

2. Enhanced Engagement: The interactive nature of functional grammar promotes higher levels of student participation and motivation.

Disadvantages

1. Less Emphasis on Rules: Some students may struggle with the lack of explicit instruction on grammatical forms, leading to potential gaps in knowledge.

2. Assessment Challenges: Evaluating students' understanding of grammar can be more complex due to the focus on context rather than isolated rules.

Comparative Analysis

Teaching Practices

In Uzbekistan, traditional grammar approaches have been predominant in English language teaching, particularly in formal educational settings. Teachers often rely on textbooks that emphasize rule-based instruction and provide limited opportunities for communicative practice.

In contrast, functional grammar approaches are gaining traction, especially in more progressive educational environments that prioritize student engagement and practical language use.

Research indicates that students exposed to functional grammar approaches tend to show higher levels of motivation and interest in learning English. The use of group work, role-plays, and real-life scenarios allows learners to see the relevance of grammar in their daily lives.

Conversely, traditional methods may lead to disengagement due to repetitive drills and a lack of contextual learning.

Language Proficiency

While traditional grammar instruction may lead to a solid understanding of grammatical rules, it often falls short in developing overall language proficiency. Students may excel in written tests but struggle with speaking and listening skills due to a lack of practical application.

Functional grammar approaches, by focusing on communication and meaning making, tend to produce more well-rounded language users capable of navigating real-world interactions effectively.

Implications for English Language Teaching in Uzbekistan

The comparative analysis highlights the need for a balanced approach to grammar instruction in Uzbekistan. While traditional methods provide essential foundational knowledge, integrating functional grammar principles can enhance student engagement and practical language use. Educators should consider:

1. Curriculum Development: Designing curricula that incorporate both traditional and functional elements can provide a comprehensive framework for language learning.
2. Teacher Training: Professional development programs should equip teachers with strategies to effectively blend these approaches, fostering a more dynamic classroom environment.
3. Assessment Innovation: Developing assessment methods that evaluate both grammatical knowledge and communicative competence will provide a more holistic view of student progress.

Conclusion. The comparison between traditional and functional grammar approaches reveals significant differences in teaching methodologies, student engagement, and language proficiency outcomes. While traditional grammar instruction has its merits, the shift towards functional approaches aligns more closely with the communicative needs of learners in today's globalized world.

For English language teaching in Uzbekistan to evolve effectively, educators must embrace a more integrated approach that values both grammatical accuracy and communicative competence, ultimately preparing students for successful interactions in English-speaking contexts.

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