

Although the role of grammar in foreign language teaching has not ceased to arouse controversy, the majority of experts in the field nowadays claim that the teaching of this language subsystem may be indispensable in some educational contexts and situations. Such a context are without doubt philological studies, because their graduates are expected to achieve a very high level of target language proficiency so that they can become professionals, irrespective of whether they work as teachers, translators or language consultants in large companies. This entails a very high degree of expertise in the grammar of a foreign language, with the caveat that this knowledge should not be limited to the ability to do grammatical exercises, but it also should enable the use of grammatical structures in communication. It has been observed, however, that the level of linguistic knowledge among candidates willing to major in a foreign language at a university has been steadily decreasing to the degree that many students find it exceedingly difficult to use even basic grammatical structures, which makes grammar instruction a real challenge for academic teachers. One of the solutions could be applying suitable teaching techniques, which, however, may not be sufficient, because there is too little time to deal with every single structure, too little premium is placed on using these structures in communication tasks, and the process of teaching is very traditional. In the light of the above, the role of applying suitable language strategies for learning grammar should be recognized. Such strategies can be defined as deliberate thoughts and actions employed with the purpose of learning and gaining greater control of grammar structures as well as developing the ability to use these structures in spontaneous communication.

Taking all of this into consideration, the main aim of the study is to determine the effectiveness of grammar learning strategy instruction among at least 150 first- and second-year English philology students. This effectiveness is considered in relation to the quantity and quality of the strategies applied, the level of mastery of selected grammatical structures (conditionals, modal verbs in the past, and stylistic inversion), both with respect to the familiarity with requisite rules and the ability to use them in spontaneous communication, as well as autonomy in learning foreign language grammar. Another goal of the project is to determine the extent to which the effects of the training procedures are mediated by beliefs about learning and teaching grammar, dominant learning styles, motivation, grit, curiosity, enjoyment and engagement. The first stage will involve constructing or adapting data collection tools, as well as designing the pedagogic materials that will be used in the process of instruction, with both the instrumentation and the materials undergoing piloting procedures. Universities where the intervention will take place will be selected and the teachers who will agree to implement the instruction will be provided with ample training. Grammar learning strategy instruction will span an entire academic year (one semester in each of the two groups involved), and will involve ten 30-minute segments of regular grammar classes, consisting in the presentation of relevant strategies, adequate practice in their use, as well as opportunities for their transfer to new situations. The data will be collected by means of the following tools: (1) a grammar learning strategy questionnaire, as well as a questionnaire measuring the level of autonomy in learning grammar, filled out before, during and after the training, (2) tasks intended to tap into conscious knowledge of the selected structures and the ability to employ these structures in communication performed before the intervention, on its completion, and four months later, (3) questionnaires tapping into the strategies used while performing these tasks, (4) journals filled out throughout the intervention, (5) questionnaires gauging students' beliefs about learning and teaching grammar, learning styles, motivation, grit, curiosity, enjoyment and engagement, filled out before the training. The analysis of the data will enable the researchers to establish the effectiveness of strategy instruction, in particular with respect to the development of second language knowledge, and will be the starting point for adjustments to the materials used in the course of the study. The materials that will be produced in the process may be used during grammar classes taught to philology students, which may contribute to greater mastery of this language subsystem.