

DEVELOPING FAVORABLE ATTITUDE TOWARDS ENGLISH LANGUAGE THROUGH FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR TEACHING

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ABSTRACT

Language acts as a window to knowledge and also an international system of communication. The English language plays a significant role in communication. It is easy to learn all languages if they are practised well. Most of the students have negative attitude towards English grammar. Normally created examples are used in the traditional grammar teaching. Though these examples are simple, they are not realistic. So the students find it difficult to apply them in real linguistic settings. They are not able to produce their own language expressions correctly. To solve these problems, teaching should be effective by making use of formal and informal English in different settings, and real examples must be used in grammar teaching for the students to learn grammar with great interest. The goal of teaching grammar is making the students understand how language is constructed. So they don't find any trouble applying the language that they learn from functional grammar teaching. If grammar is taught creatively and innovatively students will be very much interested towards grammar learning. When the students practice learning grammar, the teacher should provide them an opportunity to produce correct grammatical sentences. This paper examines the favorable attitude towards English Language through functional grammar teaching.

KEYWORDS: *Functional Grammar Teaching, Grammar and Communication in Communicative Language, Listening and Speaking*

INTRODUCTION

There is an important relationship between grammar and communication in communicative language teaching of grammar. Grammar is generally misunderstood and not liked by learners. It is because of the view that grammar is a collection of difficult and fixed rules and structure in the language. To make the grammar learning interesting, the structures should never be taught, it will be acquired by learners on their own. If the structures are taught, the learning will be boring. Students are fed up with the instructional grammar practices in grammar teaching and are overwhelmed by the rules and they are unable to understand those rules before they begin to understand anything. But functional language ability will be acquired only through interesting texts accompanied by meaningful interactions in the second language class room.

Strengthening the language skills of the students is the main purpose of teaching grammar. How to use the grammar and vocabulary of the English language to achieve communicative goals effectively should be the focus of teaching grammar. This helps the learners applying the grammar rules that they have learnt in different situations appropriately. As acquiring

the grammar of the target language clearly and thoroughly is the aim of grammar learning, it enables them to understand the context of learning grammar. These approaches determine which grammar items should be taught effectively for the better communication of students, and also how much exposure is available to them because of this learning.

Grammar teaching is considered as essential to build the ability to use language expressions correctly. As it is the system of a language, it gains its prominence in the second language teaching. The teaching of grammar should centre around the way grammatical items are correctly used. Grammar is a reflection of any language. It is not the fixed rules of a language. It is in fact the mental system of rules to form the words and sentences of the language. It is not that the rules are created first and then the language is spoken and developed. Languages started by making sounds which evolved into words, phrases and sentences.

The language skills listening, speaking, reading and writing are improved and enriched by grammar learning. So grammar has an important role to play with in language learning. In listening and speaking, its role is crucial to grasp and express spoken language. So it is necessary to acquire the capability of producing grammatically correct expressions in the language. In reading, grammar helps to understand the sentence interrelationship in a paragraph, a passage and a text. In writing, grammar allows them to put their ideas into meaningful sentences to communicate successfully. In vocabulary learning, it helps them to form meaningful and communicative statements. It helps them to express meanings in the form of phrases, clauses and sentences. So grammar plays a vital role in the four language skills and vocabulary to establish communicative skills.

Grammar is very important for learning language effectively and so several different innovative teaching methods are used to make the students learn well. Vocabulary, grammar and structures can be learnt extensively through playing games. The students can practice well as they are often motivated to play games. During this activity of games, the students are focused on it and start absorbing the rules subconsciously. At first students are made aware of the importance of grammar that just as they cannot play a game without observing the rules, they cannot speak or write properly without paying attention to the rules of grammar. There is a focus on those areas of usage which usually pose problems to the average learner of English. The topics are briefly discussed in simple non-technical language in the class room. Clear examples are given to the students to help even average learners do the exercises on their own. Students acquire grammar simply by being immersed in the language.

If the students learn grammar lessons through games, stories, and activities, they can sense and understand the rules before they are explained. They can naturally learn grammar and language by being exposed to it and understanding the meaning. They get attracted, and their critical thinking and comprehension skills will also be developed.

Games help students to learn grammar rules in the meaningful context. Learning grammar through games and problem solving activities are the most useful and better communicative activities. Grammar games that are amusing and challenging were highly motivating. These grammar games help students of secondary level to gain knowledge in grammar and to apply and use their learning properly. There is an advantage of this grammar learning through games as it allows the students to practice grammar structures effectively. Students should be motivated to play games repeatedly to master over the grammar item that they learn through games. They should be focused on the activity they indulge in will learn the grammar

subconsciously. While games are motivating for them, these activities will increase the cooperation and competition among the students in the classroom.

Grammar games are used as a central part of the students learning process. The point is that the fun generates energy for the achievement of the series goal. The exercises and games could act as adequate frames for the teaching of any grammar.

As everyone loves reading stories, they are used for illustrating grammar rules naturally. Storytelling is one of the extremely versatile and flexible techniques for teaching any grammar item. It provides a realistic context for teaching grammar rules. It holds and focuses the students' attention towards grammar learning indirectly. Students like to listen to stories, the grammar items and the rules they have learnt through them are remembered ever by the learners. As it is a convenient and a good grammar teaching tool, it holds students' attention best. Grammar rules are interconnected in stories. As a result students will respond to teachers and will be amused to learn grammar along with the storytelling process. If the stories are short, they will remember the teaching points illustrated in them.

Mostly students find formal grammar lessons boring and tedious. It is made interesting through interesting situation and stories. If grammar is taught in a meaningful context, students will definitely enjoy learning it. Because of this, language skills are acquired easily. For this purpose, stories can be used to give them a chance to read and also to create an opportunity to narrate many stories. They are able to describe their favorite person, part of the story or anything. Their creativity will be developed, and they may write their own new stories too. Mostly dialogues are used in stories to show clearly how people generally interact with each other in English. When the students read them, they will eagerly pick up the phrases and learn the grammar rules from them, and they will enjoy reading short stories.

Teaching the English grammar is not simply a teaching of structured grammar rules of English to the students. It is the practical way of encouraging them to feel, think and produce the accurate grammatical structures on their own. Most of the students think that they cannot understand grammar and apply the grammar rules that they have learnt in their life. So they are frustrated and give up learning grammar items. If they learn the rules subconsciously instead of cramming them into their head, grammar learning will be easier. They must realize that grammar items are very essential to communicate successfully. They should consciously learn basic grammar rules first. Then they will realize that it is necessary for them to receive grammar rules instruction to use English language accurately and fluently.

CONCLUSIONS

Students should be good at grammar to perform the soft skills well, to be successful in entrance exams, competitive exams and in their ability to communicate accurately and properly, and also in all other areas of life. So the more fun students have with grammar learning paves way to successful learning of grammar. Thus more varied approaches must be used to teach grammar effectively.

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