

CHALLENGES IN TEACHING GRAMMAR

Jumabayeva Adolat Sabirovna

Teacher at Urgench State University.

Foreign Philology Faculty

Department Interfaculty foreign

languages

Abstract: In the teaching of English as a second language, grammar is considered as one of the significant skills to master. While teaching and learning English both teachers and students face a number of difficulties in using grammar. This paper highlights the difficulties and challenges in teaching and learning English grammar .

Key words: grammar, challenges, teaching, learning English,

Grammar is one of the significant parts of language curriculum at all levels of our educational system. Students always have a struggle with grammar and their teachers have grown frustrated over mistakes in their writing and speaking. Learning grammar has been part of language skills since grammar is a fundamental feature of a language. If learners fail to comprehend the rules of grammar, they will fail to socialise effectively in that language. At every level of learning institution, the teaching of grammar is always perceived as the most difficult skill to teach and the most boring skill to learn.

Grammar is a main component of any language in the world. Without grammar, you can't understand, for example, the time of action whether it happened in the past or in the present. We can say that grammar is abstract in the mind and it becomes concrete in the use. Teaching grammar is serious and has a lot of challenges that teachers face. Grammar is a set of rules and systems for sentences control without these systems, a sentence of clear and explicit meaning cannot be formed. Learning English grammar helps students understand and knows important language concepts that help them understand many aspects sentences correctly. Without studying the grammar, the correct results of learning the language will not be achieved. The grammar is the basis of every language. Its certain methods and

organization that must be followed and not ignored in order to achieve the goal of mastering the language and learn the language efficiently and correctly. It is also known that each language has its own words, sounds and systems. It's not just learning the correct language; it is a discovery of the nature of the language.

The difficulties and problems faced by students in learning the rules of English should not be ignored. Learners face many problems reading and writing as well as in learning English grammar. For example, the student learns English only in the classroom, and because the mother tongue is not English and the lack of English in everyday life, this makes the opportunity to learn English very weak. Identifying these difficulties and pointing them out will help teachers find solutions to these difficulties and problems more easily and better and provide better education for students.

One of the problems generally faced by most of the teachers of English is the poor standard of the students. Students are even ignorant of the basic rules and structural patterns which they are supposed to have learnt at the lower level. If a teacher directly starts his teaching at the graduate level without trying to know the level of the students, his efforts will not bear any fruits as he will not be able to raise a structure over a feeble foundation. The English teacher is often portrayed as an "unattractive grammar monger whose only pleasure in life is to point out the faults of others" [3] For the most part, within the classroom, any mention of grammar causes the student moments of discomfort and sometimes even terror. Many teachers have tried to make grammar teaching a non-threatening, imaginative and useful activity within the English curriculum. Previous studies on students' and teachers' attitudes and perceptions of grammar instruction in the context of language teaching and learning suggest a disparity between students and teachers. While students favour formal and explicit grammar instruction and error correction, teachers favour communicative activities with less conscious focus on grammar.

According to Widdowson " ... grammar is not a constraining imposition but a liberating force: it frees us from a dependency on context and a purely lexical categorization of reality." [3] According to Morelli (2003), students perceived

themselves as having a better attitude towards grammar instruction in context, while performing slightly better after having experienced the traditional grammar instruction.[2]

On top of the long debating issue of grammar teaching approaches, language instructors often find grammar as a challenging part in teaching English language subject. Grammar of Uzbek and English differ in many ways. The most common difficulties for students learning English grammar are:

- Mismatch between form and function; – Many grammatical forms are used to perform several different functions. On the contrary it is possible to find that several different forms are available in English to express what seems to be a single function.
- Contrast between English and mother tongue; – When the English grammar system works different from the learner's native language difficulties arise very easily.
- English is full of exceptions of grammar rules; – Probably in every language exist exceptions to the normal grammar rules and so it is also in English.

Also teachers have difficulties with grammar. Teachers unlike the students do not have problems with using of grammar rules but especially with their explanation. The most common problems in teaching English:

- Explanation of grammar in the interesting and motivating way;
- Understandable explanation of the grammar;
- Formulation of grammatical rules without unnecessary exceptions ;

From my own experience I can say that I have the biggest problem especially with the interesting and motivating way of grammar presentation. However I think it is not an invincible problem. The contemporary school equipment enables to use computers, interactive smart boards and other tools popular among pupils and so increases their motivation for grammar learning.

Grammar overall, is a challenging language skill. Even experienced English teachers may face difficulties in explaining grammar to students. This can be the result of

different students' needs in learning. Hence, it is crucial for English teachers to figure out their students' proficiency and issues in learning English grammar. Generally speaking, in teachers' perceptions, both teachers and students invariably face serious difficulties with regard to EFL grammar instruction, students facing them to a greater extent than teachers. It is obvious that EFL teachers consider these difficulties quite serious, which suggests that serious attention needs to be paid to them. There may be generally recommended ways of teaching EFL grammar, but it would not be proper to adopt them universally without looking at the possible difficulties that might go with those methods suggested. While a less favoured method might pose fewer problems and hence be more effective, a more favoured method might be less effective owing to greater difficulties or problems in implementing it. The difficulties may also be influenced by the context in which a particular method is used. It is, therefore, necessary to make a detailed study of such difficulties faced by teachers and students in specific contexts, take appropriate steps to overcome them, and adapt the method to suit the actual teaching and learning.

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