

Teaching Grammar Among Young Learners

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Antonation: In this article grammar is excessively learned according to ideas of previous scientist. Besides that teaching grammar methods to young learners are thoroughly expressed. The aim of writing this article to boost the awareness how is grammar important to develop language skills.

Kalit so'zlar: syntax, pattern, principles, rules, pessimist, reinforcement material, effective communication, structures missing, communicative environment.

This part is totally about the definitions of grammar. This will cover the general definitions of grammar from several experts. The followings are the general definitions of grammar: According to Ur (1988: 141), "Grammar is the way a language manipulates and combines words (or bits of words) in order to form larger units of meaning". This definition suggests that the vast majority of people know grammar but they are not aware of the system and the pattern which arranges the sentences. Whereas, Close (1992: 1) defines that "Grammar is a chiefly a system of syntax that decides the order and patterns in which words are arranged in sentences".

Meanwhile, Radford (1997: 1) states "Grammar is the study of the principles which govern the formation and interpretation of words, phrases, and sentences". It means that grammar is the basic of any language and it can not be ignored in effective language practice and language study. In addition, Thornbury (1999: 1) defines "Grammar is partly the study of what forms (or structures) are possible in language". It shows that grammar is the study of rules in language to change the form of words and combine them into sentences. From the general definitions above, it can be known that grammar is a part, a rule, and a structure of language that show how language's sentences are formed and used in language practice, and or the study and practice of the rules by which words change their forms and are combined into sentence. Commonly, Grammar is often misunderstood in the language teaching field. Many people say that the structures of language do not have to be taught, they think that learners will acquire their grammar naturally and if the grammar is taught the lessons that ensue will be boring. According to Thornbury (1999: ix) "Grammar teaching has always been one of the most controversial and less understood aspect of language teaching, few teachers remain indifferent to grammar and many teachers become obsessed by it", and even, many learners when they hear the word grammar, think a lots of pessimist, difficult, boring, and confusing about grammar. However, recent days in language teaching world, the interest of teaching and learning grammar in English language teaching is arising. Now, Grammar becomes a necessary part of classroom language learning, especially in elementary level

English learners should understand about English grammar correctly.

According to Close (1992: 1) "English grammar is first and foremost a matter of fact. We say one man, two men; write, wrote, written; he may drive, he wants to drive; no one will stop him driving. Whoever learns English must accept such forms and construction as fact, and must develop the habit of using in appropriate situations".

Based on the explanation above, it shows that English grammar is very important in the use of English. Therefore, English Grammar must be taught to every English learner, including young learners at Elementary level. According to Ur (1988: 141), "Grammar is the way a language manipulates and combines words (or bits of words) in order to form larger units of meaning". It tells us that grammar is the part of any language and can not be ignored in language teaching. Based on my observation at SDN 01 KALIWULUH, I saw that many students do not know about grammar and how to use it at all. It could be seen when the students spoke and wrote some expressions or utterances in grammatical error. For example: "I am like swimming", "I have three book", "She go to school by bicycle everyday". Even, they could not distinguish verb and noun. However, all these motivated me to teach grammar in more attractive techniques to the students of grade 6 in SDN 01 KALIWULUH. Teaching English Grammar to young learners is not as easy as turning over palm hand. Therefore, the best teaching techniques are really required to gain the good result from teaching grammar to young learners. So teacher must be smart in choosing and selecting the attractive and effective techniques in order to make students be able to understand and practice English grammar easily. Importance of Grammar

This part contains the explanations from experts about the importance of grammar in language use. It includes the advantages of grammar. The first advantage is making the words effective and being master in communicative environment, according to Rutherford (1987: vii), "By understanding grammar we can make words effective and become master of our own communicative environment". It means that grammar acts as the bridge and social device which makes the meaning of our words can be conveyed appropriate with its functions in a context of a communication. So, grammar creates the effective communication and brings the meanings right on target.

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The second advantage is helping us to observe and remember the facts. We can see and differentiate the time and the history of an incident or event, and fact that is talked about by seeing the forms or the grammar items and rules in it. According to Close (1992: 1), "Grammar is helping us to observe and remember the facts, the linguist arranges them methodically and, where possible, draws general rules from them, perhaps explaining historically how they came to be what they are". These draw that grammar is an important thing and should be accepted as a part of fact. The third advantage is helping us to convey meaning. According to Thornbury (1999: 4), "Grammar is a process for making speaker's or writer's meaning clear when contextual information is lacking". It shows that when the contextual information is lacking in an expression, the rule or the particular grammar form will express their particular meaning, and it describes that grammar has important role in language use. So, it is known that grammar has potential in making and conveying meaning. The explanations above tell that the advantages of grammar are helping us to create acceptable sentences, making speaker's or writer's meaning delivered clearly, and leading us to be master in our communicative environment, and show that grammar is an important part of language and it has important role in both oral and written language.

Techniques in Teaching Grammar

In presenting grammar, techniques that can be implemented, among other things are Using Text, TPR (Total Physical Response), Picture, Real object, Game, and Song.

1. Using Text Technique, According to Celce-Murcia and Hills (1988: 149), "if we want to teach in a way that facilitates transfer to our student's reading and writing we must teach it at the text level". Ur (1988: 7), explains "here, the teacher presents the class with a text in which the grammatical structures appears. It can be a short story or dialogue which appears in written form in the textbook. It is may read by teacher and or students loudly. The students may be asked to read aloud, repeat, reproduce from memory, or copy out instances of the use of the structure within the text". If the grammar point that is emphasized is imperatives, the text must contain the imperative sentences.

2. Using Total Physical Response, According to Larsen-Freeman (1986: 9) it is called "The roles of teacher. Here, the students do as the teacher says so they can learn what teacher knows". In presenting Imperatives for example, Celce-Murcia and Hills (1988: 42), explain "TPR is a very effective way to present imperatives to the students", for instance, asking several students individually by saying 'Arin, close the door!.' When Arin does it correctly, acknowledge this by saying 'good', and let the rest of the students watch and learn. Then, continue with other directions such as "walk to the table!", "sit down!", etc".

3. Using Picture, According to Brewster, Ellis, and Girard (1992: 90), "by using illustration and picture the learner will get great help to convey meaning and memorize what taught". In this Presentation stage, teacher may present the grammatical items by using picture. In teaching imperatives for instance, teacher shows traffic symbols such as symbol of stop, turn left, turn right or another picture of crying boy, sad man, crying boy, etc. While showing the picture of stop, teacher saying "don't enter", and then, give the students turn to say and repeat it also.

4. Using Objects in the classroom, According to Celce-Murcia and Hills (1988: 93), "The classroom itself provides a wealth of realia to use in teaching grammar". The teacher can use the things around the students as media in presenting and explaining imperative sentences, such as teacher is holding a pen or book while saying "take the pen", "take the book", etc. Then ask the students to say as how what the teacher says. For instance, the teacher holds a pencil then asks them what do you want to say with this pencil?, they will say "take the pencil", therefore, indirectly they can say imperative sentences. After they can do that, try to hold other things.

5. Using Game, Celce-Murcia and Hills (1988: 133) states that "well-planned game can teach and reinforce grammar points very successfully". Further, Brumfit, Moon, and Tongue (1995: 7) writes "to ensure the students have the opportunity to use a wide range of language, teacher must include a variety of task based on games, stories, collaborative problem solving or information – gap which will provide wherever possible a context and audience for the production of spoken and written language". One of the examples of game that can be applied is as follow; it is started by dividing the students into groups of rows. Then, give the student sitting in most front a card written imperative sentence, and then, he or she whispers it to his or her friend sitting behind him or her. Then, it continues until the last member of the group sitting the most back, and next, the last member of the group has to write the sentence correctly on the blackboard and do the order of the sentence. (If the sentence sounds "put a bag on the table!", he or she must write it on the blackboard and do what the sentence says).

6. Using Song, According to Brewster, Ellis, and Girard (1992: 178) state that "the learner can practice new grammatical pattern or vocabulary through song and rhymes". Dubin (In Celce-Murcia and Hills (1988:116), points out that "song can be utilized as presentation context, as reinforcement material, and as vehicles through which to teach all language skills". Here, teacher begins to introduce the song to students by telling them a little about it, who wrote it, what the title, for example. Then teacher gives the lyrics to the students. Next, teacher sings or plays the song and allow the students to listen, enjoy, and sing it together. Then, teacher explains the points of the structure that are emphasized to the students through the song and ask to the students to pay attention to certain sentences containing grammar item that is going to be taught. So they will know the correct example of the form through the song. The last is providing the lyrics with the structures missing, and ask to the students to fill it together with teacher.

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