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The Importance of Using Game Strategy in Teaching English Grammar

A B S T R A C T

English language plays an essential part in everyday situations over the world. It is a global language that transacts with all sides of life. So, all non-native learners must study the English language. Grammatical knowledge is considered a significant component of English language learning. It is a crucial mean in constructing confidence, fluency in using English language (Sultan, 2012 : 1). English language teachers use many techniques and strategies to gain grammatical knowledge. One of these strategies is the Game strategy. The game strategy presents entertaining drills and creates comfortable learning milieu. It invigorates stimulus among learners. This study is intended at defining the nature of game strategy that may develop learners' grammar, specifying features of grammar that will be enhanced by employing the Game strategy and finally shedding light on the usefulness of Game strategy in improving students' grammar and defines to what extent it affects on language learning and using. Presenting a theoretical background about the game strategy which affects the learning of grammar, introducing a literary review around the game strategy, about its definitions, features, and about its prominence in English language teaching especially in teaching grammar are the procedures which were followed by the researcher to achieve the aims of this study.

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اهمية استخدام استراتيجية اللعب في تدريس قواعد اللغة الانجليزية

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الخلاصة:

تقوم اللغة الإنجليزية بدور أساسي في المواقف اليومية حول العالم. إنها لغة عالمية تتعامل مع جميع جوانب الحياة.

لذلك يجب على جميع المتعلمين غير الناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية دراسة اللغة الإنجليزية.

تعتبر المعرفة النحوية عنصرا هاما في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية. كونها وسيلة حاسمة في بناء الثقة والطلاقة في استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية.

يستخدم مدرسو اللغة الإنجليزية العديد من التقنيات والاستراتيجيات لاكتساب المعرفة النحوية. إحدى هذه الاستراتيجيات هي استراتيجية اللعب. تقدم استراتيجية اللعب تدريبات مسلية وتخلق بيئة تعليمية مريحة، حيث تنشط التحفيز والمنافسة بين المتعلمين .

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى القاء الضوء على فائدة استراتيجية اللعب في تحسين قواعد اللغة لدى الطلاب.

قدم البحث خلفية نظرية حول استراتيجية اللعب التي تؤثر على تعلم القواعد ، تعريفاتها وخصائصها وأهميتها في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية خاصة في تدريس القواعد.

1. Theoretical Background

1.1 What is grammar?

Thornbury (2004: 1) states grammar is the forms or structures that are possible in a language. He added that grammar consisted of many parts. The fundamental components of meaning like words and the rules to gather them to construct novel sentences, establish the grammar of a language.

Swan (2009:9), adds that grammar is the rules that display in what way words are joint, settled to present firm types of meaning.

According to Radford (1997:1), grammar is not merely attracted in creating the words, phrases and sentences with each other but moreover concerned with the clarification.

Besides, the grammar of a language is the explanation of the methods by which words can convert their form (Harmer, 2001:3).

1.2 The Prominence of Grammar

Harmer (2001:3) and Muter (2016: 7) say that assisting learners to use English with systematized and accurate structures is the core aim of grammar teaching. If learners study English with obvious and accurate constructions when the students are fresh, they will be precious conversationalists in futurity. Learners can

converse merely in restricted positions without grammar. So, it is considered a vital portion of the language study.

Abu Jeld (2004: 6) adds that grammar supports individuals' language. He said that EFL learners want to study abroad and they must pass international examination like TOEFL and IELTS, should be proficient in grammar to pass these exams.

Also, learners require rules, construction and exactness use of grammar to achieve fluency in the language (Belchomber, 2007: 3).

1.3 Teaching Grammar

According to numerous schools of linguistics, the notion of grammar is distinct. For instance, traditional school think that grammar treats as a group of rules and ideologies While according to the structural school, it is the education of in what way sentences are designed, organized and ordered. In addition to these opinions, there is another opinion of the transformational school, it tells that grammar is the instructions that generals definite sentences organized together and permit talkers to comprehend expression they have do not hear before, whilst others consider grammar as the functions of language, this is the idea of the communicative approach as (Kailam and Muqattach, 2003:187).

Therefore, there are many methods were produced depending on the opinions of these schools. Some tutors select the traditional style and the clarifications of the English syntax, whilst others consider the implied grammar teaching and the methods which focus on the communication are more productive (Nusseini, 2004:1).

1.3.1 Methods of Teaching Grammar

1) Teaching grammar based on presentation, practice and production

To clarify this method, Russell (2008:201) says that through this method language is offered in a text by methods containing symbolizes, pictures and visual narrative. Then, the current language is experienced by exercises and organized skills like filling gaps or matching sentences

Lastly, the learners are requested to convey and create the target language utilizing their words in an open drill deprived of assistance from the tutor. So, the grammar and the language can be educated by using three stages, the first stage

relies on the instructor utilizing various productive techniques, this stage is called presentation. The second stage is called practice; this stage depends on the students beside the aid from a tutor. The third one is named production which entirely depends on the students who are questioned to express their understanding.

2) Teaching Grammar based on Inductive and Deductive Techniques

To provide learners with a worthy opportunity to exercise thinking skills, the tutor should use deductive and inductive methods in teaching grammar.

AL- Kharrat (2000: 5) says that the deductive method is a way to teach language whereas the grammar rules do not use immediately like the inductive method.

Creating a helpful and collaboration milieu among learners is achieved by both inductive and deductive methods of teaching. So learners can realize the comprehension and remembering of the rules and after that producing a meaningful speech (ibid).

3) Teaching Grammar based on Game Strategy

1. What is Game Strategy?

Game strategy is an outstanding way of teaching grammar. This strategy is not merely used for amusement activities; it is also used for achieving communication.

Harb (2007: 33) believes that Game strategy is a mean for developing problem-solving skills and motivating the learners' language competence. He added that games strategy are drills which requisite efforts to realize definite objectives

Hadfield (2002:4), states that the game strategy is "an activity with rules, a goal and element of fun". Deesri (2002:4) adds that it is a game that contains several elements, instructions, competition and amusement. It also creates an energetic and positive milieu for learning.

"Motivating and fun activities can be time-consuming for teachers to create" this is believed by Jones (2005:1).

According to Saricoban and Metin (2000:5), games strategy must contain definite rules differentiating them from other schoolroom drills like songs, telling stories, debate, writing, reading, and role-play.

2. Features of Games Strategy

Yu (2005:34) says that games strategy has involved some feature. It:

- contains a challenge against either a duty or a challenger.
- is directed by a certain group of rules.
- is plain engaged in.
- Psychologically, the game strategy is a random stance distinct from actual life.
- Socially, the actions of game strategy are treated in and of themselves, to be the least significance.
- game strategy has a fixed amount of probable solutions, that is, only a limit number of things can happen through play.
- Game strategy must always finish, though the end could come basically since time has run out.
- Game strategy has amusing and stimulating.
- Game strategy has rule-governed.
- Game strategy has a well-defined aim.
- Game has an engaging strategy.
- Game strategy has a competitive feature.
- Game strategy has a closure feature.

3. Kinds of Games

- Computer Games

Franciosi (2010:1-5) said that activities of classroom and computer games contain public notions in that together are objective-directed and rule-controlled methods prepared to occupy participants with tasks. There is a list of four mutual features of computer games that share the same notions in accustomed classroom drills:

- Aims that are perceived as pure realizable.

- Associated tasks that progressively became harder.
- Meaning selections for contributors.
- An inexact result.
- **Video Games**

Cruz (2007:1) said that video games are an exciting means to cost time with students. This type of strategy is filled with educational multidisciplinary study and they interest learners' attention as well as improving course material. They also detect learners to the language, both written and spoken. Besides, stimulating learners in the schoolroom more than the book they learn it.

4. Presenting and Organizing Games

Rinvoluturi and Davis (1999:Xv) say that game strategy starts by providing students with clear directions of a game whether by using the target language or the learners' mother tongue. The instructions are:

1- A short Reading Comprehension

This strategy is started by writing the instructions of it on the board by the tutor. After that, he clarifies the game and questions the learners to refer to these written instructions as they play.

2-Picking it up as you Go along

The tutor should explain the game to his students. Also, the learners who comprehend these instructions are presumed to clarify them to their colleagues who do not understand them.

3-Closed Pairs

After providing students with the instructions and explanation of the game, a group of learners start a game while other students watch and pursue them. Likewise, the game can be achieved by giving half of a game by a learner and the entire class proceeds with the other half. Slattery and Willis (2003:6) say when the teacher shows students what they should do and, simultaneously, provide them with instruction for games in the target language; students will listen to the tutor with a real aim.

5. The Importance of Games in Teaching Grammar

Vernon (2008:1), believes that there are four reasons to use game strategy in teaching grammar.

The first reason is the learners do not merely acquire information but may stratify and practice what the students educate. So, this strategy is considered a communicative tool. The second one is the effect of repetition within the game strategy which makes the process of learning and understanding language by students easier. Also employing games stimulate learners and raise the collaboration and challenging between students and this creates a favourable milieu which is considered the third reason. The last reason is related to the obstacles which are faced by learners during learning a new language, it needs a great effort. Games simplify the matter since they are entertaining and challenging and they permit the use of meaning context.

According to Kablan (2010:352), the game strategy has a significant teaching role; it helps tutor and learners in the class. It is supposed that game strategy, which is well-ordered depending on the aim, raise the learning process, strengthen retention and supply effective learning with joy in place of boring lessons by increasing motivation.

Hadfield (2002:4) clarifies the importance of using the game strategy in the process of teaching grammar through the following points:

1) Games as a Communication Tool

By using games, the tutor who uses grammar strategy focus on communication rather than on the accuracy of using the language. He provides learners with a good opportunity to communicate with the English language and this can help in overcoming the gap between the schoolroom and the real world.

2) Game as a Motivation Tool

Yu (2005:46) agrees with Hadfield (2002:4) in the idea of considering a game strategy as a motivation tool. They said that "language games have an effective ability to develop student's motivation". They added that employing games strategy in teaching grammar may vary a lecture and motivate learners. They thought that lesson becomes beneficial and less worrisome.

3) Games as a Competition Tool

Hadfield (2002:4), Jones (2005:1), and Hong (2002:1) state that using the game strategy as a competition tool can change the dulllest lesson to an exciting one.

4) Using Games to Enhance Student's Achievement

Robert (2010:1) and Hadfield (2002:4) mention that learner accomplishment in the classroom can be developed by tutors through employing academic game.

5) Games are connected with Enjoyment.

Since students think genuinely about the appropriate way to win and gain a high score and this encourages them and makes the lecture more exciting game can latch the students' attention said by (Deshpande, 2008: 29).

6) Games Increase Students ' Proficiency

Deesri (2002:3) and Hadfield (2002:4) assume that the opportunity to practice the target language is achieved via games since the students are providing with the situation which gives them the chance to employ real communication. Besides, they use and practice grammatical rules and other areas of language.

2. Conclusions

This research is written to define the nature of game strategy that may develop learners' grammar, specifying features of grammar that will be enhanced by employing the game strategy and finally shedding light on the usefulness of game strategy in improving students' grammar.

The researcher has found that games strategy as a teaching-learning tool is amusing and shaped a non-threatening learning milieu that stimulated interactions between learners and tutors, it creates communication and teamwork and students' active participation.

Also, it shows that game strategy improved learners' motivation and they can be more attracted through the process of learning grammar.

Briefly, games strategy is more productive and more effective than the traditional method in teaching EFL, particularly teaching grammar. They provide the learners with the opportunity to take numerous roles within grammar lessons such as thinkers, problem – solvers, and decision-makers. These roles assist them

to learn, acquire and employ English grammar in many situations and use the target language accurately and fluently.

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