

The Importance of Grammar in Acquiring English at the Secondary Level Education in Bangladesh

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Abstract

English language teaching and learning has been accounted as an important sector in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh English has been considered as a foreign language and it has been started teaching using grammatical rules from the primary level. This paper aims to work on the Importance of Grammar in acquiring accuracy in English for the Students at the Secondary Level in Bangladesh. Due to its' investigation it has focused on the use of the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) to identify the circumstances of the teaching as well as the learning process. The paper has also worked on the implication of different steps in the ongoing accuracy process and the progress of the students in producing clean paper through applying the grammatical rules. It has sorted out the sensible level of the students in writing or writing development and the teacher's effort towards the students to help them in learning the grammatical rules of the Second Language. The study is a mixture of qualitative and quantitative and typologically the research is descriptive and explanatory. The study has involved observation, proficiency tests as methods of collecting data. It has also used articles, books, etc. as secondary sources. The instruments used to implement the methods were- A test paper for Translations, A paper for writing a paragraph on "Corona Virus", and a Checklist.

Keywords: Accuracy, Grammar, Classroom, Language, Study.

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I. Introduction

Grammar can be deemed as the sound, structure, and meaning system of language and it is being found in all languages. People who communicate with one another, they know the correct grammatical rules and structure. The native students of a country also learn the grammar of both their mother tongue and the foreign language (FL). So grammar is the main basis of learning a language. In Bangladesh, English is considered as a Foreign Language, so the students here have to learn grammatical items of English. Grammar plays a very important role in language and gives way out for the speakers to learn the correct form of language.

This paper is going to deal with the importance of grammar in term of accuracy in English of the students at the Secondary level of Bangladesh. Accuracy is counted for writing, for speech delivery fluency is considered. So this paper has discussed accuracy in the case of writing development of the students at the secondary level.

Objectives of Study

The general objective of this paper is "to identify the role of grammar in acquiring accuracy in English." Thus, the specific objectives of the study are,

- To observe the efforts of the teacher to teach English using grammatical rules.
- To observe the performance of the students in the application of the Grammar Translation Method (GTM Method) by the teacher.

II. Literature Review

The topic is on the importance of Grammar in acquiring accuracy of English of the students at the Secondary level in Bangladesh; here the primary concern is on the accuracy level of the students with learning the rules of grammar so the topic is related to the field of linguistics and language teaching.

Wang (2003) said that it is necessary to teach a child how to communicate to express himself, if he develops proficient communication skills rather than only by imitation, it will be effective for his upcoming days as he has to deal with the outside world. He considers that grammar is necessary for a variety of reasons, important in all forms of communication. Grammar has been taken for granted as a very famous method that is called the Grammar Translation Method (GTM Method). Rouse (1925) said that the Grammar-Translation

Method was appeared in foreign language classrooms from the mid-19th century to the mid-20th century. It was first initiated in Latin and ancient Greek classrooms in the early 19th century, replacing more communicatively-oriented methods as Latin was postponed to be a spoken language. It is important to know regarding the GTM Method to flourish a suitable learning of English to gain accuracy. While, Eskey (1983) focused on accuracy which he finds important for the sake of learning a language. He says that accuracy one of the key components of learning English. In the recent world, it is being found that learning the use of grammar and concentrating on accuracy are emphasized by many language learners over fluency. Some formalists' arguments claim that learning a language refers to acquiring forms and rules, a different view has been taken by some activists and has been claimed that learning a language means knowing the use of language. Thus, Cook (2001) said that accuracy over fluency had been promoted by early teaching methods. For example, the Grammar-Translation Method has been used by language teachers for many years and regarded as the traditional style of teaching method focusing on grammatical interpretation and translation. Likewise, Witkin (2005) said that accuracy intends to the dimension to which the outcome of a measurement, calculation, or specification conforms to the correct value or a standard.

However, the researcher wanted to focus on the importance of grammar in gaining accuracy in English at the secondary level in Bangladesh and put so many importance on the thinking of famous linguistics to understand their viewpoint regarding grammar and accuracy. This work could be considered as a primary attempt from a master's student to focus on grammar which is found difficult by some students and another particular thing is accuracy which always almost underrated under the term of fluency to establish the fact that fluency and accuracy both are important, learners need to focus on both equally.

III. Research Methodology

The research has been conducted using a mixed methodology including observation method and proficiency test. Some data from secondary sources like articles, grammar books, etc have been used. The research has been done on the secondary level students, for this, the students of class VI and VIII have been chosen, because they might be the effective choice to do the test on writing skills to sort out the importance of grammar. The research is a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods. The typology of the study is descriptive and explanatory. The sample has been taken randomly.

The research has included the visit of a school to collect data through using a writing test for the students and finally went to a classroom to observe the teachers' teaching process and the students' reactions towards the classroom activities. 10 students from class VI and students from class VIII have been randomly selected with the help of their class teacher. Classroom of class VII has been observed taking permission of the authority of the selected school. Translation and paragraph have been used for the proficiency test of the students and a checklist for classroom observation of the selected school.

IV. Findings and Discussions

This is the most important part of the study, it has presented the data and later it has also discussed the collected data to prove the statement that the importance grammar in acquiring accuracy or not. It has presented both the survey to show the quantitative result of the proficiency test (Translation & Writing Test) and the qualitative result of the checklist.

The data has been collected through visiting one school using two kinds of proficiency tests to test the writing skills of the students at the secondary level. Ten students from class VI and eight students from class VIII have been selected. Ten translations from Bengali to English for students of class VI and the task of writing a paragraph on the Corona Virus to the students of class VIII have been given, each of the test carried ten marks. A checklist has been made to observe the teaching procedure of the teacher, for that she observed a classroom of class VII.

I. Presentation of Proficiency Test(Translation)

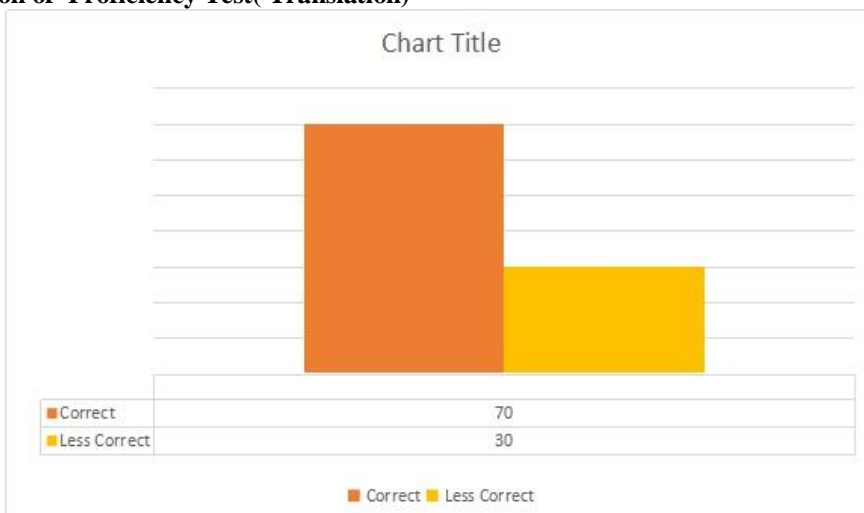


Figure 1: Translation Chart

From the above figure, it can be found that, 70% of students answered all the translations correctly, only 30% of students made mistakes but they are not more than one and just related to tense, not the entire sentence structure.

II. Presentation of the Writing test

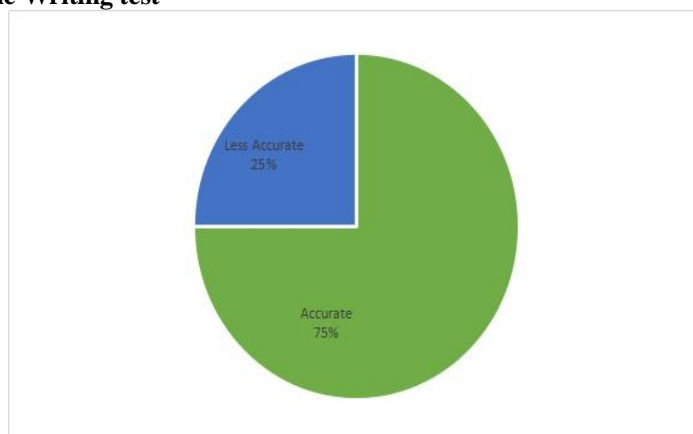


Figure 2: Writing Chart

From the above chart, the writing test of the students showed that 75% of students are writing accurately without doing any grammatical mistake and only 25% are doing some silly mistakes, and those are easily correctable.

III. Presentation of the Checklist

The checklist on the importance of Grammatical rules in acquiring accuracy in English.

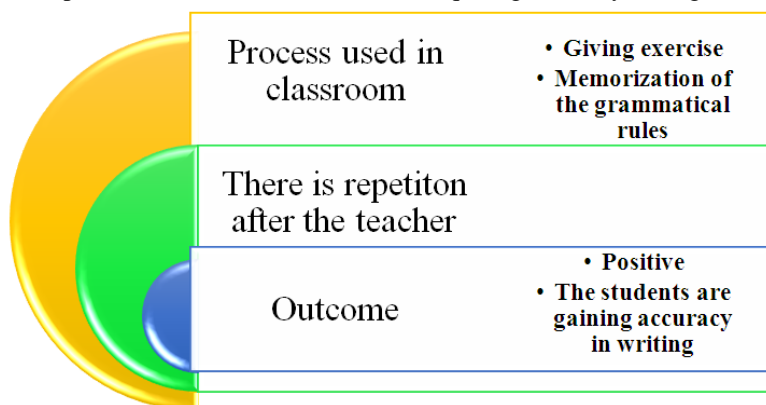


Figure 3: Checklist Presentation

Figure: 3 has shown that the teachers are widely using the GTM Methods or grammatical rules to teach the students English. The students need to repeat after their teachers to memorize the grammatical rules because the teachers are focusing on grammar to make the students accurate in producing correct writing in the second language. There is a natural order in learning the rules, the easier one will be learned earlier and the harder one will take time, for example, the students easily catch the rules of simple present, past, and future tense rather than the perfect continuous tense. Then they can remember the verb phrase of first and person rather than third-person singular number, most of them forget to add “s” or “es” after the verb.

Lastly, the researcher got the positive outcome of using grammar in case of acquiring accuracy in writing. From the data analysis, the research lastly has come upon with some findings regarding the role of grammar in acquiring accuracy in English at the secondary level. Such as:

- The students are emphasized most on the memorization of grammatical rules to produce correct sentences.
- The teachers are using GTM Method.
- The students are very conscious regarding their own mistakes that is very effective for learning English, especially for the writing development.
- The students are acquiring accuracy in writing that is pretty much recommendable in the way of learning.
- They are being conscious of accuracy even though they are speaking, they try to produce correct sentences when they speak.

IV. Conclusion

The role of grammar is to help the students discovering the nature of Language, that language assembles of predictable patterns that make what we say, read, hear, and write intelligibly. Accuracy is one of the important components of learning the language that goes with the line of grammar. In today’s world, it can be notified that learning the manner of grammar and emphasizing accuracy is focused on by many language students over fluency.

According to some formalists’ argument, learning a language means exercising forms and rules, some activists take a different view and claim that learning a language means learning how to conduct a language. The Grammar-Translation Method was established in foreign language classrooms from the mid-19th century to the mid-20th century. Latin and ancient Greek classrooms initiated the method in the early 19th century until the Latin was postponed to be a spoken language. Accuracy is necessary to express one’s potentiality since the Second language is not one’s mother tongue, it is a kind of epistemological right in linguistics to produce accurate language when it is being published in a formal paper.

Grammar is the most authentic way to learn a language accurately. So everybody should focus on the grammatical rules to gain accuracy in learning English.

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