



Vebsayt: <https://involta.uz/>

TEACHING GRAMMAR IN CONTEXT

Урантаева Насиба Бахтияровна

Урганч Давлат Университети Хорижий филология факультети

Факультетлараро чет тиллари кафедраси ўқитувчиси

Abstract

This type of in-context grammar instruction also encourages students to continue their grammar education outside the classroom, when reading the newspaper or their favorite novel. Like grammar, the teaching of discourse conventions like paragraph unity, transitions, and cohesion, as well as mechanics like spelling and punctuation.

Annotatsiya

Ushbu turdagi kontekstdagi grammatik yo'riqnoma talabalarni sinfdan tashqari, gazeta yoki sevimli romanini o'qiyotganda grammatik ta'limni davom ettirishga undaydi. Grammatika singari, paragraf birligi, o'tish va uyg'unlik kabi nutq konvetsiyalarini, shuningdek, imlo va tinish belgilari kabi mexanikani o'rgatish.

Key words: grammar instruction, outside the classroom, discourse, transitions.

Kalit so'zlar: grammatik o'qitish, sinfdan tashqari, nutq, o'tish.

Although some classes, such as the enhancement class, were added, the standalone grammar class was eliminated. Grammar instruction was integrated into all the classes and taught in the context of activities. The students were encouraged to recognize grammar points in the various language exercises and activities they completed and to create the rules rather than memorizing them. Instead of being taught as a theoretical system, grammar was taught as a communication tool. What better way to review past tense than to read a biography, which is written in that tense, and then interview a family member and write and tell that person's history in the past tense? If the students were learning to write a persuasive essay, they would learn how to recognize and use conditional if clauses, cause and effect because of clauses, and modal auxiliaries in the context of expressing attitudes. This type of in-context grammar instruction also encourages students to continue their grammar education outside the classroom, when reading the newspaper or their favorite novel. Like grammar, the teaching of discourse conventions like paragraph unity, transitions, and cohesion, as well as mechanics like spelling and punctuation, was integrated into the lessons at logical places and not taught directly as a stand-alone activity. Students noticed how punctuation was used and in groups discussed the rules as they came up. For example, the appropriate use of quotation marks was integrated into the unit on biographies, and when students were composing essays and oral reports, it was a natural time for them to emphasize the importance of transitional phrases. Over time, students became proficient in set rules that they could apply to a variety of writing assignments.

Alternative methods of assessment.

Another substantive change to the curriculum originated because of the strong desire to change the pre-university testing paradigm. The instructors rejected anxiety-producing discrete point testing in favor of evaluation that resulted in positive wash back, which refers to the fact that assessment can be fun, rewarding, non-stressful, and supportive of learning. The teachers wanted assessment to encourage students to become autonomous and thinking young adults, and they embraced practices such as formative assessment, which measures progress periodically throughout the course. For example, when teaching writing as a process of brainstorming, planning, drafting and revising, the instructors felt that each of those elements should be assessed with the students' participation, as opposed to administering a traditional timed essay test as a midterm or final exam. Portfolio assessment was another useful method for evaluation that required students to become actively involved by filing their work products in binders. This created interest and motivation because the students were in charge of gathering the results of their hard work and discussing it with the teacher. Each student wrote a reflective introduction to the portfolio to assess how his or her written work had improved and changed over the semester. The students' reflection, self-appraisal, and interaction with the teacher made them participants in the assessment process. For mid-term and final exams, students were evaluated by group work and presentations to the class, some of the same skills that would be essential for attending the university. Although performance testing like this can be stressful, it becomes less so when it revolves around familiar tasks. Since there had been so much emphasis on group work, for the mid-term, the students were divided into groups of five to discuss a local, national, or international issue, and they were evaluated on their oral and group work skills. For the final speaking exam, the students were asked to use their new interviewing skills to question a person whom they admired but who was not part of their family.

The choices of interviewees were excellent: those hoping to major in business interviewed bankers and presidents of companies, and five students interviewed different freedom fighters from the 1971 War of Liberation. A set of twins both interviewed the same television producer, which at first caused concern; however, because of their diverse interests, both young men approached the interview from a different perspective, and it was as if they had interviewed two different people. Finally, the students presented the results of their interview to the class, and they were outstanding. Even the very casual students dressed up for the presentations, and one young man related that his mother and grandmother laughed when they saw him because he so seldom wore dress clothes.

Course curriculum evaluation.

The pre-university program also conducted a formative assessment of the new curriculum so that any changes could be made while instruction was in progress. The students were asked to evaluate their classes each month using “did well” and “could improve” statements, and the teachers used these evaluations to make changes and improve future lessons. As the semester progressed, the students became more critical and gave the teachers some excellent feedback.

Results of the new curriculum: The student perspective.

The students readily adapted to the critical thinking, enhancement, and writing classes. As is typical with the speaking skill, they were initially hesitant, but when they had the opportunity to express their opinions on relevant academic and social issues, they soon forgot about their shyness. A large amount of positive feedback from the students had a lot to do with the effort, enthusiasm, and attitudes of the teachers. According to Singer (1986), a climate of warmth

and empathy “may be the single most important factor in determining how well your students learn” (32). “A large body of research shows that if a teacher is warm, caring, and enthusiastic, the students learn more” (Singer 1986, 33). The teachers were constantly praising and reinforcing the students, especially about the way they were meeting challenges and adjusting to the university curriculum. This positive reinforcement may have been the biggest reason that students so readily accepted this new way of learning. Results of the new curriculum: Teacher perspective. Teachers felt that the curricular changes to the pre-university program solved numerous problems. Group work was more successful, there was more interaction and critical thinking, and the students’ language skills improved. From the teachers’ perspective, the hardest adjustment was teaching grammar in context. It is so much easier to present rules and to give the students pages of exercises. Nevertheless, the instructors became adept at selecting materials that contained pertinent examples of the grammar that students needed to see and hear. Overall, the teachers were amazed at the students’ progress, and this inspired them to seek out challenging, interesting, and authentic materials. They were especially impressed with how the students were able to look at issues from different points of view and to offer creative answers to problems. Even the shyest students started to get up in front of the class and provide evidence to support a position and then provide evidence to support the opposite point. The teachers often came back to the department office saying, “You won’t believe this.” After a group of pre-university students entered the regular university, it became apparent that an unidentified problem had been solved by the new curriculum: the students became extremely confident. Previously, it had been easy for regular university instructors to distinguish between students who came from English medium schools and those who came from Bangla medium schools. The former group did the talking, while the latter group sat silently, and there was a social division between them. However, after students who had

attended the newly revised pre-university program were admitted to the university, instructors there reported that the usually “silent” students from Bangla medium schools were involved and active in class and were providing feedback on the class curriculum. In their university English language classes, they were more advanced than some of the other students. The problem that CFL faces is how to keep these students adequately challenged in the regular university English modules. I am not certain that many undergraduates learn how to think critically by listening to an experienced critical thinker speaking, any more than reading good academic writing teaches them to write like academics. Both skills need a more direct mechanical transmission that should be part of college education, but in an explicit fashion, not by osmosis. In addition, the assumption that student-led discussion in active learning is done in the absence of a “sage” at the table is the difference between a seminar and a dining hall conversation. Not all students have the skills (at least not yet) to take in much information in the 40- minute lesson — there is a mismatch between what the instructor thinks the students can assimilate (often based on assumptions of prior knowledge) and what each student might actually take away from the lecture. Critical thinking and argument making rely upon a synthetic process that requires practice and experience. However, warns Schumann: “Don’t assume that all students would prefer NOT attending lesson”. The more a class approaches the application of “active learning,” the more it asks of students.

Conclusion.

Bangladesh University’s experience with curricular reform should be heartening to all teachers who have students who want to attend an English medium university, either in their own country or abroad. The program’s basic components can be

duplicated in a pre-university program, and the core principles apply to other language programs as well. The main reason for the success of the curriculum revision is attributable to advanced planning and collaboration. The decision to include all the instructors in the planning group was a wise one. They were dedicated to the program's success, and they willingly attended the weekly meetings to discuss the curriculum, the student feedback, what was going well, and what should be improved. In addition, the instructors would gather informally on an almost daily basis to discuss new material that had been discovered. As part of the decision-making group, all the pre-university instructors felt responsible for the success of the program. Since the teaching assistant was also part of the group, she was able to keep the changing materials and the lesson plans up to date. It is important that one person in the planning group have this role so that an organized record is preserved. To develop a program that will help students reach their goal of becoming successful university students, the following factors should also be considered:

- The students should be consulted on their needs through a needs assessment and ongoing evaluations.
- The teachers need to work as a team, teaching the same topics and interacting with the students in a positive way.
- The teachers need to make an extra effort to find or create materials that meet the students' needs and interests.
- The important element of critical thinking should be integrated into every class and most activities.

This skill will help students in their education and as parents, spouses, employees, and citizens. When these factors are included in curriculum development for a pre-university program, the result will be enthusiastic, confident, and successful university students. Rather than looking at the program as a barrier to university life, the students will see it as a gateway to their university career.

References.

1. Akers, S. 1998. Power learning. In English skills with readings, 4th ed., J. Langan, 560–70. New York: McGraw-Hill.
2. English Teaching Forum | Number 32 01 09
3. Bean, J. C. 1996. Engaging ideas: The professor’s guide to integrating writing, critical thinking, and active learning in the classroom. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
4. Bruffee, K. A. 1984. Collaborative learning and the “conversation of mankind.” *College English* 46 (7): 635–52. Elbow, P. 1986. Embracing contraries: Explorations in learning and teaching. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
5. Mokammel, T. 2007. Bostrobalikara: Garment Girls of Bangladesh. DVD. Directed by TanvirMokammel. Dhaka, Bangladesh: Kino-Eye Films. Nunan, D. 1996. Learner strategy training in the classroom: An action research study. *TESOL Journal* 6 (1): 35–41. Oxford, R. 2001.
6. Integrated skills in the ESL/EFL classroom. Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse for Languages and Linguistics. ERIC Digest ED456670.