

IMPLEMENTATION OF STORY-BASED APPROACH IN TEACHING GRAMMAR FOR ELEMENTARY LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

In this research article, the usage of a story-based approach to teaching grammar is highlighted among elementary learners of grades 3-4. The purpose of this exploratory action research is to analyze the importance and effectiveness of a story-based approach in improving students' skills in grammar. A group of elementary school learners was involved in the process. Before the action Phase questionnaires in Google form, informal interviews with colleagues and students were completed. Based on the findings action plan was created and experienced in the classroom. Findings, action plans, and results were explained in detail in the following paragraphs.

Keywords: The Story-based approach, exploratory action research, grammar, Before the action Phase, After the action Phase, stories.

АННОТАЦИЯ

В этой исследовательской статье освещается использование основанного на рассказах подхода к обучению грамматике среди учащихся начальных 3-4 классов. Целью этой научно-практической исследовательской работы является анализ важности и эффективности подхода, основанного на рассказах, в улучшении навыков учащихся в грамматике. В работе принимала участие группа учащихся начальных классов. Перед фазой действия были заполнены анкеты в форме Google, неформальные интервью с коллегами и учениками. На основании полученных данных был создан план действий и апробирован в классе. Выводы, планы действий и результаты были подробно объяснены в следующих параграфах.

Ключевые слова: Подход на основе рассказов, научно-практическая исследовательская работа, грамматика, Фаза до действия, Фаза после действия, рассказы.

ANNOTATSIYA

Ushbu tadqiqot maqolasida 3-4-sinf boshlang'ich sinf o'quvchilari orasida grammatikani o'rgatishda hikoyaga asoslangan yondashuvdan foydalanish ko'rsatilgan. Ushbu harakati tadqiqotining maqsadi o'quvchilarning grammatika bo'yicha ko'nikmalarini oshirishda hikoyaga asoslangan yondashuvning ahamiyati va samaradorligini tahlil qilishdir. Jarayonga bir guruh boshlang'ich sinf o'quvchilari jalb etildi. Harakat bosqichidan oldin Google shaklida so'rovnomalar, hamkasblar va talabalar bilan norasmiy suhbatlar amalga oshirildi. Natijalar asosida harakat rejasi tuzildi va sinfda tajriba o'tkazildi. Natijalar, harakatlar rejalari va natijalar keyingi paragraflarda batafsil tushuntirildi.

Kalit so'zlar: Hikoyaga asoslangan yondashuv, ilmiy amaliy tadqiqot ishi, grammatika, harakatdan oldingi bosqich, harakatdan keyingi bosqich, hikoyalar.

INTRODUCTION

Storytelling is an ancient, human pastime, often used to entertain, explain the human condition, and share an aesthetic experience through expressive language (Pellowski, 1984). In and out of the classroom, stories can be an effective teaching tool. Stories connect us to new ideas and new people in addition to instructing us and aiding in our memory retention. We might feel identified and heard when stories reflect our own experiences and origins. When stories are motivating and empowering, they can inspire us.

The subjects of tales might range from historical figures and events to fictional characters and narratives to students' lives. Incorporating stories into grammar practice is particularly effective because students can: (1) see how grammar is used in authentic contexts; (2) remember the grammar more easily than with discrete sentences on unrelated topics; (3) foster creativity; (4) learn about significant people and events, both past and present; (5) develop their creativity; and (6) learn about important people and events.

Effective grammar teaching and learning can result from understanding how tales aid students in acquiring grammatical knowledge within the task-based approach framework. Many children's books repeat language, formats, sentence structures, or material appealingly while retaining the readers' interest. On the one hand, Krashen (2004) suggested that frequent exposure to target sentence structures and new vocabulary words in a "comprehensible context" may aid learners in learning the structures and words because it helps them remember the sentence structures, words, and other target language features used in the stories (Sunkyoung, 2013). On the other hand, it encourages students to share stories with the teacher and enables kids to predict what will happen next by utilizing their imagination. On the other hand, it encourages

students to share tales with the teacher and enables them to predict what will happen next by using their imaginations (Cameron, 2001). Children will retain the details of a structure if they do this. Grammar patterns and several other grammatical aspects can be internalized over time by learning them via stories. Storytelling is therefore a comprehensive way to teach grammar to students.

This paper is focused on one of the main problems in most EFL(English as a foreign language) classes:

1. Poor grammar knowledge of students;
2. Having difficulties to perform the grammar activities;
3. Change of grammar teaching method to make lessons more interactive.

This research work will deeply look into the following questions:

1. How can a story-based approach be implemented in teaching grammar?
2. How to choose a proper story according to age and interest?
3. Why should this approach be used in classrooms?

15 students from 3-4 grades participated in the exploratory action research.

Various types of data collection tools were applied in the research: my reflection, informal discussions with colleagues and groupmates in NamSIFL, questionnaires from students, and observation by colleagues.

MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

To conduct this exploratory study, both qualitative and quantitative techniques were used. The researcher herself gathered primary data through surveys, observations, and experiments carried out during the session. To establish cause and effect, the researcher conducted an experimental study, manipulating and controlling factors. The researcher used survey questions she had written for the school's teachers and pupils to gather data. By collecting data from the abovementioned tools it was found that students do not like learning grammar by monotonous rules and structures and they find it difficult.

When the colleagues were asked to observe the lesson she noticed that only 3 out of 15 students were engaged in the grammar activities the others part were copying from each other. These students were not engaged when the teacher explained the grammar rules so they did not understand the topic well. When students had reading time they read a text and completed activities according to the text 12 students out of 15 were fully engaged in the process. My observer's advice was to change the teacher's current grammar teaching method according to students' interests.

Collecting all these data the researcher came up with a decision to try to use a story-based approach in teaching grammar to overcome all the abovementioned problems.

The action research plan was created April month was chosen as the experience period.

In this period the teacher explained;

1. “To be” using a storybook “Frozen-Anna’s Best Friends” by Christy Webster

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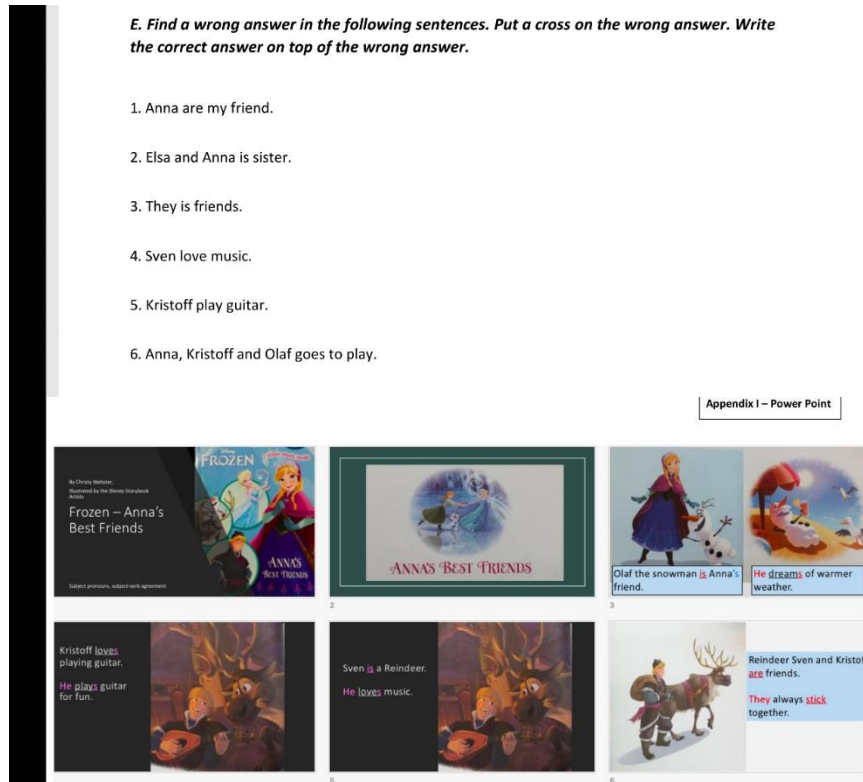


Figure 1. 2.

2. “Present simple tense” using the story about A dog’s life from the British council site <https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/listen-watch/short-stories/dogs-life>

3. “Past simple tense” using a text about Steve Jobs and creating activities according to the text. The activities were completed in pair work.

4. Preposition of place using short stories made by the teacher in Jamboard https://jamboard.google.com/d/1FS8-Zqq67_n4gU3qfFxn_0Co9kopUkneTsq9IBGROc/edit?usp=sharing

At the end of the week, the students had a progress test on topics in which they had to compare whether they had some changes or not and the results can be seen in the next paragraph.

RESULTS

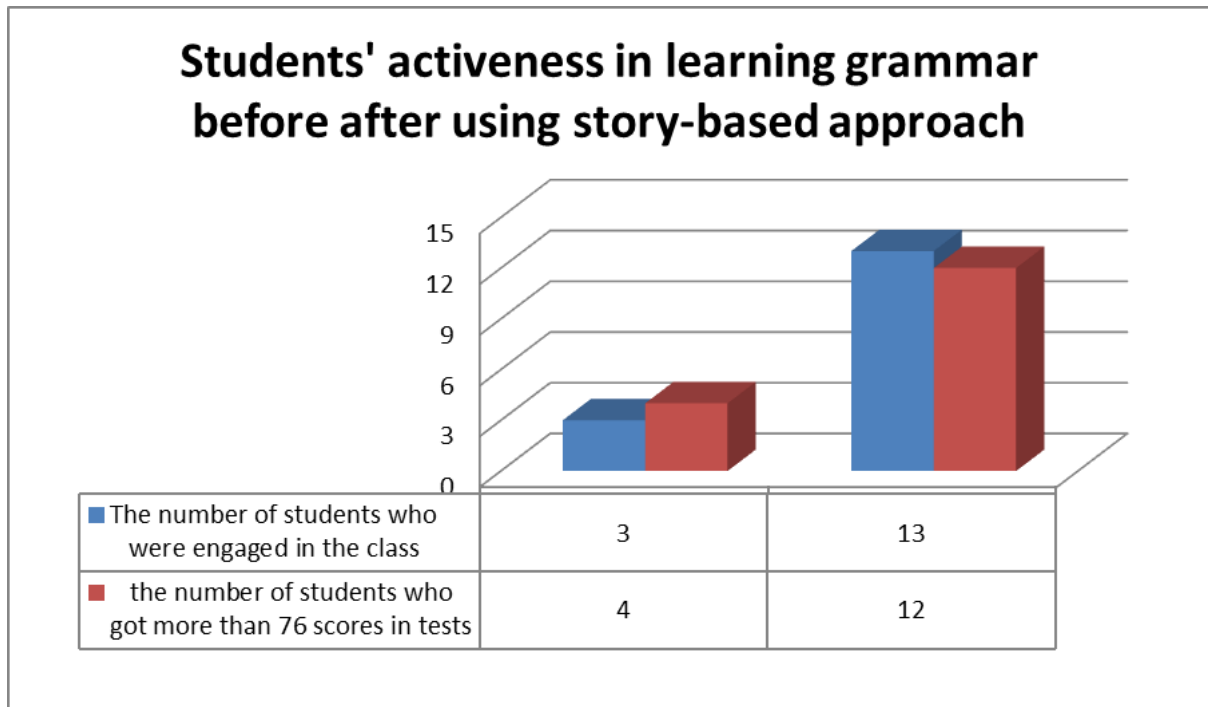


Figure 3.

In the first 3 lessons of using a story-based approach, the teacher distributed text materials gave instructions to them to read very carefully and ask whether they have unfamiliar words, and translate them then she explained the grammar topic. But students' activeness and learning progress remained the same and had no improvement. Then the teacher decided to organize more group work activities and tried to have more student-centered lessons so that students can work independently. Finally, the teacher noticed the positive results of the students' activeness. In the following lessons, the teacher kept continuing at this pace and by the end of the period, she noticed significant changes in their students' interests.

The final step was to analyze and compare the students' learning progress with the help of pre and post-tests. And the results are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 illustrates the number of students' progress during the lesson and in tests before and after using the story-based approach. As can be seen from the figure the number of students who were engaged in the grammar activities during the lesson was deficient only 3 students out of 15, while in a month, the numbers significantly increased to 13 out of 15 students which can be a great success. The students' results in performing progress tests boosted from 4 to 12. In addition, these 12 students are the ones who got more than 76 scores during tests. The reason for the low scores of 3

students is their absence in 1-2 lessons. After an extra lesson the teacher had with these 3 students they understood the missed topics and worked on their mistakes.

DISCUSSION

To collect the final results the teacher asked her colleague to observe the lessons and give feedback. according to a colleague's opinion, the lessons became more lively with active students, raising hands, student-centered approach, and various types of the group- and pair-work activities.

When students were asked to answer the interview questions made by the teacher, 90% of their answers were that they started liking learning the grammar, 70% remembered the vocabulary from the stories and could easily retell the text in their Mother tongue. 70% of students liked this approach and wanted more lessons of this type. Moreover, they were not afraid of taking grammar tests anymore as they understood the topics well through reading stories and competing activities according to these stories.

CONCLUSION

Concluding all the data from the Exploratory action research, we can say that the Story-based approach was used properly in the lessons and achieved success. We see from the Before Action Phase that students were not interested in the grammar activities, did not engage in the classes, and the results of grammar assignments were low. Only the students who attended extra English courses could understand well the topics, but others had big troubles. We see from the After Action Phase that through the teacher's step-by-step hard work, high results were achieved. Students developed skills such as:

- better understanding of the text;
- guessing the words meaning from the context;
- working with reading materials;
- better understanding the grammar using authentic resources;
- motivation to learn a Foreign language;

All these abovementioned changes were developed with the help of the Story-based approach.

This method is suitable for classes and teachers, who want to improve their students' abovementioned skills, who also have problems in teaching grammar, and who want to make the lessons more live and active, to provide learners with authentic resources using sentence structures and phrases.

Exploring your classroom helps you to understand yourself and your learners better. Overcoming the classroom problems, and providing your students with funny and effective learning.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to my mentor Feruza Erkulova, a Ph.D. teacher from Namangan State University for her dedicated hard work, which helped me to accomplish this research.

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