

A Review Study Narrativity In Teaching English Grammar

Lecturer: Sahab Salih Fenjan
University of Thi-Qar/ College of Arts
Corresponding Author: Sahab Salih Fenjan, sahab.salih@utq.edu.iq

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ABSTRACT

Language is a set of functions, the most prominent and important of which are narration, description, dialogue and argumentation. Perhaps looking at language as a set of functions helps of making the process of acquiring it an enjoyable, interesting and useful process. Hence, modern educational studies have come to facilitate language training by using dialogue, acting and storytelling methods. This article adopts previous studies based on the importance of using stories in teaching and learning English grammar in the different school grades. So it is set to provide a brief critical review of the benefit of narrative technique. One of the functions that this review is addressed to tackle the narration function, which is a trend for the intermediate, the advanced level, and a building block for the distinguished level.

KEYWORDS: grammar, technique, narrativity

1. Introduction

The 1980s showed a growing international interest among humanities scholars in narrative and biographical methods and approaches in the educational process. So educational researchers quickly joined in this theoretical, epistemological, and methodological development. This development became known as the narrative turn. Polkinghorne (1988, p. 135) states that "narrative is the structure of discourse in which human action receives its form and through which it is made meaningful". Besides, he adds that narratives are seen as a powerful means of uncovering and understanding the complex meaning-making processes that shape teaching.

Connelly and Clandinin, 1990: p. 2) confirm that teaching is a complex social process, in which different people participate interactively. Teachers and students interact on the basis of their interpretation of the situation concerning their actions, and the actions of others. The core of teaching and learning process is to understand meaning. However, understanding meaning achieved not only through techniques of teaching but it is also can be achieved through the experiential interactions when the particular meaning that the students have or carry is revealed.

McDrury and Alferio(2001) assert that narrative is a powerful learning device especially in a 'constructivist perspective' to be seen as a social process where the students collaborate together to promote the prior values intervening the new experiences . Narrative technique provides the base of participating as a team by distributing tasks and discussions.

Fengan and Badr (2020) say " The appearance of functional-cognitive approaches on the scene, assure that, language structure is not a precondition to communicate but rather to be produced by employing the materialization of the form and its meaning cognitively, communicatively and as structurally distinguishable utterances". They additionally state tha the syntagmatic content is the objective of any language learning to be associated with real life learning through suitable visual aids

Komleva et al (2021) mention that despite the functional grammar was developed since 1970s , schools

still use stereotypical methods in teaching grammar and do not focus on communicative methods. The goal of learning a language is the ability to communicate correctly and effectively by mastering the basic skills of the language in terms of grammar, phonetics, language and rhetoric. Reliably, teaching grammar based on various theories basically on universal grammar and input grammar theories but the two theories have benefits and disadvantages. Recently, the big change of the innovative trends of using the communicative curriculum are applied, grammar as is one of the basic components of language is taught and learned communicatively.

Audile et al (2024) Grammar is taught structurally and communicatively, inductively and deductively through several techniques such as: diagrammed rules, gaps filling matching, questions and answers, completing sentences, and multiple choice. jigsaw, communicative games, problem- solving, storytelling, group work, pair-work.

Discussion and Results

In this section, related studies are presented involving the methods of teaching grammar in general and the narrative technique used in teaching grammar in particular:

Button and Johnson (1997: 37) Stress on that reading is a direct cause of learning the language and that the loss or weakness of the direct guidance of reading leads to failure of learning and lack of inductive cognitive maturity. Therefore, no activity for developing students' skills is devoid of a tendency towards reading or the skill of reading, starting with the teacher reading beautiful stories in a way that endears the activity of exploration and knowledge to the students' self-reliance in determining the stories that they take as a model for the reading activity.

Valkanova et al. (2007) conduct a study that aimed to clarify the role of stories in promoting self-reflection among primary school students in a London school. The researchers used observation and videotape recording. The results of the study were summarized in that using fictional stories in teaching science helped students to understand scientific concepts, increased their academic achievement, and raised their expressive ability in using concepts and integrating them into their daily live.

Russell (2008:201) finds that the best method of teaching grammar can be achieved by presentation, practice, and production. However, increasing the students' comprehension of grammar can be achieved by using symbols, pictures, and visual narratives to be exposed as a strategy of understanding such as filling the gap, matching words or sentences.

Ahmed (2012) ensures that the importance of the story as a means of teaching reading to stimulate the exploratory student. Moreover, according to his study, the use of short stories can be the best way of combining entertainment aspects in addition to the educational ones. Therefore, teachers must choose the story carefully to suit the students' cognitive, psychological level and family life.

Mrgolin(2014) explains that narration has types that are divided according to the speaker's perspective, the addressee's perspective, and the discourse's perspective. Besides, meaning narration based on the speaker's pronoun and third person pronoun, or narration that revolves around the same event. The narrative text must contain a set of elements, the most important of which are the temporal verbal events that revolve around a topic or event in order to convey a message, meaning, or moral aim. Narration is closely linked to time as the listener or reader perceives facts and events based on the time axis. Narration has three temporal forms: sequential narration according to dates, eras, or time, such as diaries, autobiographies, and biographies, and narrative intermittent and an alternating narration between different characters, parallel times, or successive events. The time may be the time of grammatical verbs or psychological time.

Watson [Citation\(2015\)](#) states that "I put the terms together (*grammar and language use*) to signal to the reader that I am talking about the teaching of language in school (grammar instruction) but I am

approaching this subject from a broader sociocultural perspective (language use)".

Hamidah (2016) asserts that the use of narrativity in teaching grammar contributes of improving the capacity of the students in reading, comprehension, communication transferred meaning, cooperative learning, and aware of micro and macro skills as the micro skill is to know the grammatical word class and systems whereas, the macro involves the cohesive devices.

Alsharary and Alhashimy(2019) prove in their study that the narrative style through the selection of short stories showed its effectiveness in students' classification of aspects of grammar particularly the parts of speech such as verbs, nouns, adjectives , adverbs, questioning, punctuation, etc. they assert that storytelling has shown its impact on students' interaction with each other through preferring questions and discussion, and thus will help to develop language style and skills.

Yildiz and Celik (2020) adopt that the real class scaffolding has the potentiality of increasing the independency of students to learn language by themselves under the guidance of their teacher.

Spencer and Petersen (2020) explain that the narrative intervention can be applied through a set of principles drawn from clinical experiences and research help the speech-language pathologists to have a sufficient ability of teaching and a broad set of academic and social meaningful skills to varied students. Additionally, they say that the narrative is not restricted to a story grammar, but a large number of core skills, complex vocabulary

Mercer (2022) searches that when stories are inspiring will motivate the students to pay attention and understand the text message. Stories are a good way to learn the skill of reading, through which the basic rules of grammar can be acquired. It is possible to teach any of the properties of grammar, including tenses, direct and indirect speech, interrogative and exclamatory sentences, etc.

Kanaan et al (2022) built their study on the basic and purposeful strategies of teaching and learning grammar for English as a foreign language. Thus, learners and teachers must come up with a variety of strategies for teaching grammar. Therefore, adopting one strategy over another will deplete students' motivation and cognitive skill building. Choosing appropriate strategies according to the students' age, cognitive and psychological level like choosing a song, completing sentences, dialogue, word intersection, reading short stories.

Daskan(2023) assert on the crucial value of learning English is to master grammar. Many students feel the importance of grammar to be a challenged component of learning English. However, the challenge lies in the classroom learning which requires interactive and communicative techniques. The students recommend to create real materials through setting up of conditions and circumstances that allow them to use and train the language. He concludes that (80%) of students are more beneficial to listen to the teacher's explanation than to rely on themselves to learn grammar.

Fahad and Salim (2023) in their research of "Teaching Grammar and the Communicative Method in Salahaldin Secondary Schools", indicate that teachers in Iraqi schools are still using stereotypical methods in teaching grammar and do not focus on communicative methods, despite that the new English textbooks for Iraqi primary and secondary grades are of communicative types.

Conclusion

Narration is one of the materials that English classes for EFL learners can be based on, in teaching vocabulary, grammar, reading, and writing. There are many strategies and methods for teaching grammar, some of which are stipulated in the textbooks. Grammar is not only a basic component of language, but it is a difficult part of learning that students face which they may feel bored and misunderstood when it is taught stereotypically.

According to the previous studies in this reference article, it is found that many of theoretical research and applied studies focus on the fact that the narrative method for learning grammar is a good and an enjoyable method to remove the students' fear of the difficulty of grammatical rules. However, one of the critical aspects of the studies reviewed in this article is that the studies stress on teaching grammar by choosing stories to be read in the classroom, thus none of them took into consideration the importance of the school library. In addition, there is no indication whether the selection of stories is done by the teacher or by the students?

Reading short stories which are not available in the textbook, is a good incentive to attract students' attention to learning language skills and communicate them actively. Therefore, it is recommended to enhance the use of narrative technique by allocating a library reading class. Additionally, it is preferable guiding the students independently to choose and unify the story to be read and studied under the teacher's instructions for the grammatical aspects to be discussed in the next class.

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