

CHAPTER 4

ROLE OF GRAMMAR IN LEARNING A LANGUAGE

In CTET exams 6 questions in 2012, 2 questions in 2013, 3 questions in 2014, 1 question in 2015 and 4 questions in 2016 have been asked from this chapter. Questions asked in exams are related to Grammatical concepts and their use, and importance of grammar in teaching a language.

Grammar is a system of a language. With the help of grammar, words are used, classified and structured together to form coherent spoken or written communication. It provides a proper order or sequence to sentences for better representation of ideas to facilitate meaningful communication.

4.1 Definitions of Grammar

According to Thomson and Loyati, "Grammar presents the facts of a language arranged under certain categories and deals only with what can be brought under general laws and stated in the form of general rules."

In the context of English Grammar IA Gordon said, "If language is a vehicle of our thoughts and feelings, then grammar is the machine by which that vehicle is moving." Most of the people fear grammar and think it is the most boring part of learning a new language. However, we can not run away from it as it is an important factor to learn a new language.

4.1.1 Aims and Objectives of Teaching English Grammar

Some important aims and objective of teaching english grammar are

- To develop in students an understanding of structure of English language.

- To enable learners to express their ideas logically and correctly in speech and writing.
- To teach grammar as a rule governed behaviour and not as mere rote learning.
- To develop the mental abilities of reasoning and correct observation.
- To enable the students to assimilate the correct patterns of the language.
- To develop scientific attitude towards language.
- To develop taste for creativity.

4.1.2 Importance/Relevance of Teaching English Grammar

Some importance/relevance of teaching english grammar are

- Language is a complex system. It has logic in the form of grammar.
- Impact of grammar on all language learning skills is prominent.
- Enhanced communication skills call for a higher degree of grammatical competence.
- Communicative proficiency involves knowledge and application of grammar and use of appropriate vocabulary to convey meaning in a socially acceptable way. Therefore, teaching grammar is imperative.
- Teaching grammar is essential if we want to proceed from concrete to abstract.
- Importance of grammar in writing correctly is undebatable.
- Writing and speaking correctly gives anyone the appearance of credibility. Grammar helps in making anyone proficient in these areas.
- Grammar also helps in developing many mental abilities such as reasoning, observation and concentration.

4.1.3 Suggestions for Teaching Grammar Effectively

Some suggestions for teaching Grammar effectively are

- The lesson should be planned beforehand.
- Method of teaching should keep in mind the age and general standard of learners.
- The material should be taken from learner's text books.
- Sufficient practice work is to be done.
- Teacher should use appropriate teaching material aids like charts, flash cards, pictures, graphs etc.
- Demonstration of how grammar is to be used in contextual situations is very important.
- For evaluation, the objective type test should be used.

4.1.4 Methods of Teaching Grammar

Methods of teaching grammar are

1. **The Traditional Method** This method is also called the deductive method. In this method, grammar is taken as an independent subject and taught with the help of a grammar book. The teacher first tells the rules or definition, gives examples and then asks students to do the given exercises. e.g. the teacher says, "A noun is the name of a person, place or a thing." Then she gives some examples of nouns. The learners are supposed to memorise the definition of noun.
This method is not very effective as it is 'against the principles of teaching and students find it boring and dull'.
2. **The Informal Method** This method implies teaching of grammar not by rules but by usage. Through continuous practice of using words while speaking, reading and writing, grammar can be taught and therefore learnt by students. This is done while teaching of text book or detailed translation of the text book is carried on. Grammatical implications are taught simultaneously. Through this method, practical use of grammatical rules are elicited. But sometimes this method becomes time consuming and may divert the attention of the students.
3. **Inductive-Deductive Method** Through this method students themselves formulate rules with the help of examples. Some steps of this method are as follow
 - Students are given some examples of similar type.
 - Students try to find out similarities by analysing or observing these examples.
 - Students are asked to draw some conclusions.
 - Then the teacher will give the rules and give new examples and ask her pupils to verify the rules.

This method of teaching grammar proves very successful and advantageous as it becomes practical, real and scientific. It follows all the maxims of teaching and pupils are not forced to cram the rules. This method also stimulates the power of thinking and reasoning.
Some shortcomings of this method are that it can be applied only to young learners. Moreover, this method is not complete in itself because sometimes students are unable to correlate examples with the topic.

4. **Incidental Method** This method is also known as correlation or reference method of teaching. This method helps students to correlate grammar with other related logical structures. Students gain a practical knowledge of grammatical rules.
Some disadvantages of this method are that it interferes with normal teaching. Productive learning is less and sometimes creating or forming an incident related to a topic may be difficult for the teacher.

4.1.5 Importance of Grammar in Development of Communication Skill

Importance of grammar in development of communication skill are

- Grammar helps in learning correct pronunciation.
- With good grammar spoken or written words gain their meaning and value.
- Knowledge of grammar improves skill of expression.
- Grammar is also helpful in increasing accuracy. Grammar frames the mind to habits of order and clearness and also to logic and rhetoric. So, grammar rules can help learners develop a habit of thinking logically and clearly.
- Grammar also helps in acquiring fluency in a particular language.
- The person will also learn how to organise and express the ideas in his mind without difficulty.

4.1.6 Importance of Grammar in Development of Writing Skill

Importance of grammar in development of writing skill are

- The learner learns to write with correct punctuation and correct language and spellings.
- With the knowledge of grammar, parts of speech etc the child develops an effective writing style.
- Expression of feelings, emotions, frustrations in an impressive manner is possible only by knowledge of grammatical rules, syntax, vocabulary etc.

CHAPTER EXERCISE

1. Which of these is central to the teaching and learning of languages?
 - (1) Listening
 - (2) Speaking
 - (3) Grammar
 - (4) Critical thinking
2. Learners find it difficult to apply rules of grammar automatically in listening, speaking, reading and writing because of
 - (1) lack of declarative knowledge
 - (2) lack of procedural knowledge
 - (3) disconnection between declarative and procedural knowledge
 - (4) None of the above
3. In teaching grammar, the teacher should not focus on error correction because
 - (1) it helps in developing communication skills
 - (2) it helps in building confidence among learners
 - (3) All of the above
 - (4) None of the above
4. A disadvantage of informal method of teaching grammar is
 - (1) it is monotonous
 - (2) it teaches grammar incidentally
 - (3) it helps in rote memorisation
 - (4) grammar is not taught systematically
5. A teacher gives many sentences and asks her students to arrange them into a letter using appropriate connectors. The skill chiefly involved in this task is
 - (1) collecting information
 - (2) expanding notes
 - (3) organising
 - (4) rewriting
6. Grammar is practical analysis of
 - (1) language
 - (2) literature
 - (3) All of the above
 - (4) None of the above
7. One of the objectives of teaching English grammar refers to
 - (1) increase our power of memorising
 - (2) increase our originality of ideas
 - (3) develop the ability to express ideas logically and correctly in speech and writing.
 - (4) None of the above
8. Which of the following statements is true in the context of grammar?
 - (1) Grammar provides a set of rules that should be followed
 - (2) Grammar has no role in the learning of a foreign language
 - (3) Knowledge of grammar helps with fluency in speech
 - (4) Grammar is a system of language which helps in polishing our speaking and writing skills
9. Which of the following is not an advantage of teaching grammar?
 - (1) Gives an overview to the learner about worldly things
 - (2) Helps to develop various language skills
 - (3) Focuses on concrete to abstract approach
 - (4) Is based on rote method of learning
10. Shaurya, a student of class IV, often makes mistakes in the use of correct tense. The teacher can correct his mistakes by
 - (1) explaining or writing rules of grammar
 - (2) asking him to memorise tense table thoroughly
 - (3) by giving real life situations or examples where one can use correct tense
 - (4) by asking Shaurya to write tense table 10 times in his note book
11. Supply the correct question tag in the given blank.
I have written a letter to my school principal ?
 - (1) Didn't I
 - (2) Won't I
 - (3) Haven't I
 - (4) Isn't it
12. He said, "Let us go for a movie". He suggested to go for a movie. The two given sentences can be differentiated by drawing student's attention to the
 - (1) change into indirect speech of an imperative sentence
 - (2) removal of inverted commas while third person is speaking
 - (3) change in the verb word from said to suggested due to type of sentence
 - (4) All of the above
13. A teacher shows some objects present in the class and asks children to tell their names. She writes their responses on the blackboard and tells that all these names are used for some objects which are called nouns. This method is
 - (1) direct method
 - (2) incidental method
 - (3) deductive method
 - (4) indirect method
14. The goal of grammar instruction is to enable students to carry out their communication purposes. This goal has three implications. Which one of the following is not one of them?
 - (1) Students need overt instruction that connects grammar points with larger communication contexts
 - (2) Students should learn by heart every aspect of grammar rule
 - (3) Error correction is not always the instructor's first responsibility
 - (4) Students should master only those aspects that are relevant to the immediate communication task
15. Complete the sentence by using correct option.
According to a few experts, the students who study grammar are very often able to solve grammar exercises
 - (1) but do not write correct speech
 - (2) but they often make spelling mistakes
 - (3) and write good speech
 - (4) but they are unable to teach grammar
16. Who formulated the theory of Universal Grammar?
 - (1) Stephen Krashen
 - (2) Jean Piaget
 - (3) Noam Chomsky
 - (4) Steven Pinker

17. Which of the following are a few features of a particular method of teaching grammar?

- A. The learner becomes inactive during class room teaching.
- B. This method is not child centred.
- C. Average teacher can use this method in a country like India.

Which method we are talking about?

- (1) Deductive method
- (2) Inductive method
- (3) Inductive deductive
- (4) Direct method

18. Which of the following is actually a merit of teaching grammar

- (1) helps in speaking fluently
- (2) emphasises only records of a language
- (3) helps in the development of language skills
- (4) requires practice

19. When a test item expects the learners to use tense forms, voice, connectors, prepositions and articles accurately, such approach can be called

- (1) improper grammar testing
- (2) Integrated grammar testing
- (3) direct grammar testing
- (4) mixed grammar task

20. Which of the following statements is false in the context of grammar?

- (1) Descriptive grammar emphasises rules
- (2) Prescriptive grammar is useful for the study of classical languages
- (3) Inductive method is based on psychological principles
- (4) Traditional method of teaching grammar emphasises cramming or rote learning

21. grammar has replaced grammar.

- (1) Structural, formal
- (2) Formal, functional
- (3) Functional, structural
- (4) Functional, formal

22. You are Ritik, a student of class II, you have to bring your own stationary.

You will need one scale, two pencils and an eraser. The

underlined word is a of what he has been asked to bring.

- (1) reference word
- (2) synonym
- (3) conjunction
- (4) substitute word

23. Practice of grammar in a controlled manner can be done by

- (1) correcting wrong sentences produced by learners
- (2) gap-filling grammar exercises
- (3) writing paragraphs and essays
- (4) explaining the use of particular structures

24. A child studying in class II says "I writted the letter". It indicates that the child

- (1) does not know grammar rules at all
- (2) should memorise the correct sentence
- (3) has over-generalised the rules for making past tense verbs
- (4) is careless and needs good training in using grammar

Previous Years' Questions

25. When young learners are taught to improve their spelling and punctuation, they will

[CTET Jan 2012]

- (1) enhance their fluency
- (2) nurture their creativity
- (3) sharpen their listening skills
- (4) improve their accuracy

26. 'I loved Ophelia : forty thousand brothers could not, with all their quantity of love make up my sum'.

The phrase '... forty thousand brothers' illustrates a figure of speech called

[CTET Nov 2012]

- (1) imagery
- (2) personification
- (3) hyperbole
- (4) allegory

27. The homonym of 'bier' is

[CTET Nov 2012]

- (1) bear (2) beer (3) bare (4) bar

28. An example of linking adverbials is

[CTET Nov 2012]

- (1) the
- (2) these
- (3) so
- (4) your

29. In the word 'scarce', the phonetic transcription for 'a' is

[CTET Nov 2012]

- (1) /e/ (2) /ea/
- (3) /ie/ (4) /ae/

30. The students make mistakes while playing a grammar game. The teacher should

[CTET Nov 2012]

- (1) call aside the erring student and offer some guidance
- (2) call aside the student incharge in the group and instruct him/her to guide the students
- (3) quietly note down the mistakes and hold a remedial class for the 'erring' students
- (4) quietly note down the mistakes and discuss them with the class after the activity

31. 'Awareness raising' grammar games encourage students to

[CTET July 2013]

- (1) use learnt structures to communicate with one another about a given theme
- (2) think consciously about the structures they have learnt
- (3) collaborate in completing a given activity
- (4) engage and feel about human relationships while the teacher controls the structures

32. The Humanistic Approach is specifically tuned to the

[CTET July 2013]

- (1) process where sequence is taught along with how to present the related contents
- (2) mastery of academic disciplines with all their characteristic features
- (3) application of learnt structures, content, concepts and principles to new situations
- (4) processes that enable students to discover structures for themselves

33. In the case of vocabulary use, grammar provides a pathway to learners to

[CTET Sept 2014]

- (1) speak in formal situations with greater accuracy and confidence
- (2) re-tell listening inputs into oral output
- (3) combine lexical items into meaningful and communicative expression
- (4) draft formal pieces of writing in higher classes

- 34.** Grammar gains its prominence in language teaching, particularly in English as a foreign language. Accuracy in language use can be achieved through [CTET Sept 2014]

- (1) intensive practice with sentence patterns
- (2) grammar is taught as the basis for all four language skills
- (3) reading more books written in the target language
- (4) integrating knowledge of structures with use and meaning

- 35.** Students of class IV can recognise flawed usage of sentence construction when the teacher [CTET Sept 2014]

- (1) tells them something is wrong
- (2) gives alternatives as possible corrections
- (3) lets them find the corrections
- (4) focuses on certain surface errors

- 36.** Choose the correct spelling. [CTET Feb 2015]

- (1) Doesn't
- (2) Doesnt
- (3) Doesn't
- (4) Does'nt

- 37.** A teacher of Class V is planning to teach grammar. Which one of the following might be a good strategy for teaching grammar? [CTET Feb 2016]

- (1) Giving the practice of grammar in context as a strategy
- (2) Asking students to carefully note down the rules from the blackboard
- (3) Giving clear explanations of the rules with examples
- (4) Asking students to do drill work only to learn rules

- 38.** Diphthongs are [CTET Feb 2016]

- (1) consonant sounds
- (2) double consonant sounds
- (3) vowel sounds
- (4) double vowel sounds

- 39.** A word with same spelling and same pronunciation as another but with a different meaning is a/an [CTET Sept 2016]

- (1) homonym
- (2) homophone
- (3) antonym
- (4) synonym

- 40.** A shorter form of a group of words which usually occurs in an auxiliary verb, is [CTET Sept 2016]

- (1) connotation
- (2) connector
- (3) contraction
- (4) conjunction

Answers

- | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. (3) | 2. (3) | 3. (3) | 4. (4) | 5. (3) |
| 6. (1) | 7. (3) | 8. (4) | 9. (4) | 10. (3) |
| 11. (3) | 12. (4) | 13. (4) | 14. (2) | 15. (3) |
| 16. (3) | 17. (1) | 18. (3) | 19. (2) | 20. (1) |
| 21. (4) | 22. (4) | 23. (2) | 24. (3) | 25. (4) |
| 26. (3) | 27. (2) | 28. (3) | 29. (1) | 30. (4) |
| 31. (2) | 32. (4) | 33. (3) | 34. (4) | 35. (2) |
| 36. (3) | 37. (3) | 38. (4) | 39. (1) | 40. (3) |