

THE ROLE OF STORYTELLING IN TEACHING GRAMMAR

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Annotation: Storytelling brings the dry rules in the textbook to life and transforms grammar into meaning through thoughts, events, and characters. The main idea of teaching English grammar through storytelling is that students do not memorize the rule separately, but perceive and remember it in context; language forms are stored in long-term memory and become automatic when connected with the purpose of communication. The story shows students "why" and "where" the language is used - deepening their understanding of grammar. This article discusses the benefits of using storytelling in teaching English grammar.

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Storytelling brings to life the dry rules in the textbook and turns grammar into meaning through thoughts, events, and characters. The main idea of teaching English grammar through storytelling is that students do not memorize a rule separately, but perceive and remember it in context; language forms are stored in long-term memory and become automatic when connected with the purpose of communication. The story shows students "why" and "where" the language is used - deepening their understanding of grammar. Story-based learning aligns with Krashen's concept of comprehensible input: a story with clear content provides students with natural input. Vygotsky's theory emphasizes the importance of learning through social interaction, while the story encourages students to engage in conversation, where they exchange ideas with each other and achieve high-level results through support.

The idea of "noticing" is also important: when a reader identifies a certain grammatical form within a story, they consciously assimilate that form. At the same time, storytelling is a synthesis of a task-oriented approach and communicative methods, requiring the application of the rule in practice.

The story puts grammar into context and shows the logical reason for words and forms: why that tense is used, why the perfect tense is needed, or when it's better to use a passive construction - these are easier to understand within the story. The story increases students' motivation, focuses attention on one point, and improves memorization; grammatical formats become more firmly established through emotional connection. It is also possible to teach speech intonation, intonation, and discourse signs through storytelling - this develops communicative competence in addition to grammar.¹

¹ Madhusree Mukherjee (2025). Story Grammar as Pedagogic Discourse: Enhancing Narrative Comprehension among ESL Learners in West Bengal's State-Run Classrooms. *Journal of Discourse Review*, 7(2), 96–108.

Before the lesson begins with a story, a warm-up is held for students to prepare the necessary vocabulary and context; at this stage, students prepare for the topic, make assumptions, and familiarize themselves with key words. The next stage is listening to or reading the story; here the teacher serves as a model with smooth, clear pronunciation. During the listening, students answer questions aimed at understanding the general content, and instructions are given to focus on certain grammatical forms. After listening, the teacher distinguishes targeted grammatical examples from the story using the "guided discovery" method; students extract the rule from the examples themselves or are led to the rule with a simple explanation. Following this, formulas are used to briefly explain the theoretical part and facilitate memorization.

Control exercises are given in accordance with the context of the story: tasks such as filling in sentences where some words or verbs of the story are missing, correcting verb forms, or rewriting the roles of the criminal and witness in the story with borrowed grammatical forms strengthen the student's ability to avoid accuracy and errors. Free production activities, such as patient scenarios, role-playing, and story recreation, teach students to coordinate grammatical forms while preserving meaning; at this stage, communication and freedom are more important than precision.² At the end of the lesson, the rules covered through the reflection and correction session are reinforced: students learn to identify their mistakes by listening to their auditory or speech recordings.

Teaching English grammar through storytelling is an effective way to make lessons interesting and interactive. When grammatical rules are often explained in a dry and abstract form, it can be difficult for students, and memorizing and applying them in practice becomes even more complicated.³ The story brings the rules to life through an event, characters, and a chain of events, which helps students understand the language through context. In this way, students do not try to memorize grammatical forms separately, but can naturally understand and apply them.

Several pedagogical theories are used as a basis in storytelling. Krashen's comprehensible input theory makes it possible to provide readers with an understandable and interesting language input through the story. Vygotsky, based on the theory of social learning, emphasizes that in the process of storytelling, students communicate in a group, learn from each other, and reinforce knowledge through support. Also, the theory of "noticing" encourages students to consciously master the rule by seeing and understanding a certain grammatical form within the story.

From a practical point of view, lessons through storytelling are organized as follows: the teacher gives students the opportunity to listen to or read the story, monitors their understanding

² Perihan Gulce Ozkaya & Bulent Dogan (2023). Grammar Teaching through Digital Stories: A Study on Developing a Module for Teaching Grammar through Digital Storytelling. *International Technology and Education Journal*, 7(2), 1–15.

³ CB Rajendran (2014). The Teaching of Grammar through Storytelling among L1 Malay Students. *Asian Conference on Education*, 1–10.

of the general content, and pays attention to certain grammatical forms. Then, using the "guided discovery" method, students derive the rule from the story themselves or explain the rule with the help of the teacher. After this stage, control exercises and free production activities allow students to reinforce the learned grammatical forms. During the process of working with the story, students' motivation increases, their memory improves, and their pronunciation, intonation, and communication skills develop.

The study of tenses in English and the ability to use them correctly is one of the most important components in the process of language learning, since each tense serves to determine the meaning of the verb and the time of the event. Tenses, not only as a grammatical form, but also as a communicative tool, allow the reader to express their thoughts clearly and understandably. An incorrectly used tense can distort the content of speech, increase errors, and lead to misunderstandings.⁴ Therefore, a thorough study of tenses and their correct application in practice increases students' confidence in language and prepares them for free communication.

Studying tenses allows the reader to determine the time of the event, narrate, compare facts and opinions, as well as express plans for the future or conditional situations. For example, present simple is used to describe everyday events, past simple to describe past actions, and future simple to describe future intentions. Thus, by studying different tenses, the student learns to communicate correctly not only grammatically, but also in accordance with the context.

In conclusion, storytelling is not only an effective but also an enjoyable way of teaching grammar. It places grammar in context, engages the reader at the emotional and cognitive levels, and naturally teaches the meaning and function of language forms. When the teacher revises the story in a purposeful, systematic, and level-appropriate manner, students gain a deeper understanding of grammar, more practical practice, and confidence in communication. If you want, I can prepare a story, a lesson plan, and a set of exercises for you on a specific grammatical topic - for example, present perfect or conditional.

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⁴ Daniel Ginting (2023). The Place of Storytelling Research in English Language Teaching: The State of the Art. *VELS Journal*, 7(2), 193–209.