



Short Communication

A study to explore the efficacy of the English Grammar course among B.Ed. student-teachers

Cerena Aurin D'cunha

St. Teresa's Institute of Education, S.V. Road, Santacruz (West), Mumbai-54, Maharashtra, India
cerena.d@sti-edu.in

Available online at: www.isca.in, www.isca.me

Received 3rd December 2020, revised 30th May 2021, accepted 9th July 2021

Abstract

Grammar is the foundation of English language. It has a great impact on all four skills of language viz. reading, writing, listening and speaking. Superior communication skills call for an enhanced level of grammatical proficiency. Competence in communication involves knowledge and application of appropriate grammar and language to convey accurate meaning. Thus, teaching of grammar is considered crucial and hence has found its way into syllabi and curriculum. English particularly as a second or a foreign language is difficult to acquire naturally; training and structured education are imperative. Though it is argued that some learners acquire grammar rules naturally, but it cannot be negated that accurate and fluent English Language requires learning of grammar. With this purpose, the researcher constructed an English Grammar Course and aimed at investigating its effectiveness among the B.Ed. student-teachers. The researcher used an experimental method to ascertain the effectiveness of the course in case of First and Second year B.Ed. student-teachers. The research would help to understand the effectiveness of the course and its further implementation on various stakeholders.

Keywords: English Grammar Course, B.Ed student-teachers.

Introduction

Language plays a pivotal role in social and mental development of an individual. It is a determining factor in the success of a student in his academic success and it also impacts his social interaction in school and society at large¹. English being a Global language is given great importance in curricula across the globe. It thus becomes essential to learn this global language in its appropriateness².

Grammar is the foundation of English language. It has a great impact on all four skills of language viz. reading, writing, listening and speaking. Superior communication skills call for an enhanced level of grammatical proficiency³. Competence in communication involves knowledge and application of appropriate grammar and language to convey accurate meaning⁴. Thus, teaching of grammar is considered crucial and hence has found its way into syllabi and curriculum.

English particularly as a second or a foreign language is difficult to acquire naturally; training and structured education are imperative⁵. Though it is argued that some learners acquire grammar rules naturally, but it cannot be negated that accurate and fluent English Language requires learning of grammar⁶.

Teachers play a pivotal role in empowering students with the skills of English language. It is teachers who to a large extent have an impact at developing language skills in their students⁷. Thus, it is of prime importance that the teachers should possess

a high level of competency in English language⁸. Thus, it is necessary to ensure that the English Grammar skills of teachers are honed before they begin their teaching career. With this objective, the researcher constructed an English Grammar Course and aimed at investigating the effectiveness of this course among the B.Ed. student-teachers. The researcher used an experimental method to ascertain the effectiveness of the course in case of First and Second year B.Ed. student-teachers. The research would help to understand the effectiveness of the course and its further implementation on various stakeholders.

Methods: The experimental method with a pretest-posttest research design was used in this study⁹.

Sample: The sample of the study comprised of the student-teachers pursuing the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree. The total number of participants was 78 of which 49 student-teachers were studying in First year B.Ed. (F.Y.B.Ed.), while 29 student-teachers were studying in Second year B.Ed. (S.Y.B.Ed.)

Methodology

The researcher has used Experimental method for this study. Single-group Pretest-posttest research design was used in which a test on one group prior to the treatment and after the treatment was implemented¹⁰. Researcher developed an English Grammar Course which was divided in 20 modules¹¹⁻¹⁵. Each module dealt with one topic of English Grammar and consisted of study

material, assignments and quizzes¹⁶⁻¹⁹. The modules were arranged in an increasing order of difficulty of Grammar topics. To test the initial level of competency in English Grammar, the researcher administered the pretest. After the pretest, student-teachers were taught the concepts in English Grammar using the English Grammar course developed by the researcher. The posttest was administered after the completion of the Grammar Course. The pretest and the posttest comprised of 50 MCQ type questions based on the concepts dealt with in the English Grammar Course.

Null Hypothesis: i. There is no significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the F.Y.B.Ed. student-teachers.
 ii. There is no significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the S.Y.B.Ed. student-teachers.

Analysis and findings: To check the effectiveness of the grammar course, the t-test was applied in order to check the dissimilarity between the pre and posttest.

Hypothesis 1: The null hypothesis states that there is no significant difference between the pretest & posttest scores of the F.Y.B.Ed. student-teachers.

The calculated t-value from the Table-1 is -11.2 while the t-value from the table at 0.05 level is 2.011 and at 0.01 level is 2.682. That means that the obtained t-value is more than the tabulated value at both 95% confidence interval and 99% confidence interval. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus there is a difference in the pretest and posttest scores of the F.Y.B.Ed. student-teachers. The negative value of t-test suggests that the post-test values are higher than the pretest values.

Also, the p-value is less than .0001 thus it is statistically extremely significant. This further suggests that the null hypothesis is not accepted, reinforcing the significant difference in the pretest and posttest scores of the F.Y.B.Ed. student-teachers.

Hypothesis 2: The null hypothesis states that there is no significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the S.Y.B.Ed. student-teachers.

The calculated t-value from the Table-2 is -7.49 while the t-value from the table at 0.05 level is 2.045 and at 0.01 level is 2.756. That means that the obtained t-value is more than the tabulated value at both 95% confidence interval and 99% confidence interval. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus there is a significant difference in the pretest and posttest scores of the S.Y.B.Ed. student-teachers. The negative value of t-test suggests that the post-test values are higher than the pretest values.

Also, the p-value is less than .0001 thus it is statistically extremely significant. This further suggests that the null hypothesis is rejected, reinforcing the significant difference in the pretest and posttest scores of the S.Y.B.Ed. student-teachers.

Results and Discussion

The findings show that a significant difference exists in the pre & posttest scores of both F.Y.B.Ed. and S.Y.B.Ed. student-teachers and the posttest scores are greater than the pretest scores. This suggests that the Grammar course enhanced the student-teachers' knowledge of grammar concepts.

As there is not much direct teaching of grammar after the higher secondary level, there may be a gap created in the knowledge due to time lapse, also, students may not have mastered the grammar concepts well in their school years. This may have contributed to the low scores on the pretest of both the F.Y.B.Ed. and S.Y.B.Ed. student-teachers.

The grammar course may have structured, refreshed and added to the knowledge and skills of the student-teachers thus resulting in a significantly high score on the post-test. Also, as the course was divided into modules containing adequate study material, assignments and quizzes, it might have enabled the student-teacher to avail in-depth information of the topics covered in the course. Moreover, each module consisted of assignments and quizzes to ensure practice of the topics taught. This may have further strengthened student-teachers' grammar skills.

Table-1: F.Y.B.Ed. T-test Results of the Pretest & Posttest scores.

Groups	No. of Students	Mean	Standard deviation	df	t-Value	P	Level of Significance
Pretest	49	36.3265	5.1372	48	-11.2	<.0001	0.01
Posttest	49	46.3061	3.8035				

Table-2: S.Y.B.Ed. T-test Results of the Pretest – Posttest scores.

Groups	No. of Students	Mean	Standard deviation	df	t-Value	P	Level of Significance
Pretest	29	35.3103	5.5491	28	-7.49	<.0001	0.01
Posttest	29	45.7586	4.0940				

Conclusion

After implementation of the English Grammar course, researcher found a marked difference in pretest and posttest scores of both First year B.Ed. and Second year B.Ed. student-teachers. The achievement of student-teachers after attending the English Grammar Course is significantly higher than the pretest achievement. English Grammar Course developed by the researcher was effective in improving the knowledge of Grammar and grammatical skills in both First year B.Ed. and Second year B.Ed. student-teachers. Since the English Grammar Course developed by the researcher was successful in significantly raising the scores of student-teachers; it has proved beneficial and effective. Considering the gains in terms of heightened scores, the Grammar Course could be further used to benefit other student-teachers, teachers and students.

References

1. UKEssays (2018). Role of Language In Semantics And Society English Language Essay. Retrieved from <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/english-language/role-of-language-in-semantics-and-society-english-language-essay.php?vref=1> (Accessed 2020-5-22)
2. Cummins, J. (2013). Language and Identity in Multilingual Schools: Constructing Evidence-based Instructional Policies. In *Managing diversity in education. Multilingual Matters*. 3-26.
3. Phillipson, R (2004). English as threat or resource in continental Europe. In A Gardt and B Hüppauf (eds), *Globalization and the future of German*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 47–64.
4. Alenezi, S. M. (2019). Exploring explicit and Implicit grammar teaching. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 8(1), 104-106.
5. Debata, P. K. (2013). The Importance of Grammar in English Language Teaching: A Reassessment. *Language in India*, 13(5), 482-496.
6. Hawkins, E. W. (1981). *Modern Languages in the Curriculum*. Cambridge University Press, 32 East 57th Street, New York, NY 10022.
7. Hinkel, E., & Fotos, S. (2002). From theory to practice: a teacher's view. In E. Hinkel, & S. Fotos, *New perspective on grammar teaching in second language classroom*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. pp. 1-15.
8. Rowe, K (2003). *The Importance of Teacher Quality As A Key Determinant of Students' Experiences and Outcomes of Schooling*. Camberwell, Victoria: ACER
9. Formplus Blog (2020). *Experimental Research Designs: Types, Examples & Methods*. <https://www.formpl.us/blog/experimental-research>. Retrieved on 27/11/2020
10. One-Group Pretest–Posttest Design (2020). *Quasi-Experimental and single-case Designs*. https://us.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/89876_Chapter_13_Quasi_Experimental_and_Single_Case_Designs.pdf Retrieved on 26-7-2020
11. Swick, E., (2005). *English grammar for ESL learners*. Chicago, IL: McGraw-Hill.
12. Swan, M. and Walter, C. (2011). *Oxford English grammar course*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
13. Murphy, R. (2012). *English grammar in use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
14. Alexander L. (1999). *Longman English grammar practice*. New York: Longman.
15. Murphy R. (1985). *English grammar in use: A self-study reference and practice book for intermediate students: with answers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
16. English Grammar Online (2020). *The fun way to learn English online*. <https://www.ego4u.com/> Retrieved on 13/4/2020
17. English Grammar (2020). *English Grammar exercises*. <https://www.englishgrammar.org/exercises/>. Retrieved on 11/4/2020
18. Learn English Today (2020). *Learn English Today lessons exercise*. <https://www.learn-english-today.com/lessons/exercise-list.html>. Retrieved on 19/4/2020
19. MBA rendezvous (2020). *English Grammar Exercises with Answers, Explanations and Examples*. <https://www.mbarendezvous.com/grammar/>. Retrieved on 20/4/2020