

Role of Grammar in Communication -Writing Skills

Dr. Anjali Hans

(Assistant Professor in English-University of Dammam Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)

Mr. Emmanuel Hans

(Research Scholar- Singhanian University, Rajasthan, India)

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Abstract

Grammar is the way in which words are put together to form proper sentences. Grammar is the collection of rules and conventions that makes languages go. In linguistics, grammar is the set of structural rules governing the composition of clauses, phrases, and words in any given natural language. The term refers also to the study of such rules, and this field includes morphology, syntax, and phonology, often complemented by phonetics, semantics, and pragmatics. The term "grammar" can also be used to describe the rules that govern the linguistic behavior of a group of speakers. The term "English grammar", therefore, may have several meanings. It may refer to the whole of English grammar, that is, to the grammars of all the speakers of the language. Grammar is the sound, structure, and meaning system of language. All languages have grammar, and each language has its own grammar. People who speak the same language are able to communicate because they intuitively know the grammar system of that language—that is, the rules of making meaning. Students who are native speakers of English already know English grammar. They recognize the sounds of English words, the meanings of those words, and the different ways of putting words together to make meaningful sentences. However, while students may be effective speakers of English, they need guidance to become effective writers. They need to learn how to transfer their knowledge of grammatical concepts from oral language to written language.

Keywords: Grammar, language, English, communicate, students, knowledge.

Grammar, regardless of the country or the language, is the foundation for communication — the better the grammar, the clearer the message, the more likelihood of understanding the message's intent and meaning. That is what communication is all about. Recent national and international events make it clear that in the United States today we are lacking in the quality of

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communication that leads to understanding our fellow citizens and the people of other countries — and this at a time when better understanding at home and abroad is so necessary. Grammar rules facilitate clear and concise communication. Errors in verb tense, sentence structure, contractions, punctuation, spelling and word usage detract from our intended message. Being an effective communicator helps us make a positive impression on others, which impacts our overall happiness, social life and employment opportunities. Our verbal skills and self-confidence contribute to our public persona. Grammar proficiency is an important aspect of working. If we're in a leadership role, individuals supervise may judge our competency based on our command of the English language. Careless mistakes can cause embarrassment and ridicule. Grammar mistakes can undermine our credibility and persuasive power.

Effective grammar instruction begins with what students already know about grammar, and it helps them use this knowledge as they write. By connecting their knowledge of oral language to written language, teachers can demystify abstract grammatical terminology so that students can write—and read—with greater competence and confidence. Rather than strive to teach all grammatical concepts to all students, teachers should prioritize and provide instruction on the grammatical elements that most affect their students' ability to write effectively. Teachers should also be sensitive to individual students' readiness to learn and apply grammatical concepts.

English grammar is the art of speaking, and writing the English language with propriety. The study of grammar helps us to review and analyze its part to get a total compression of the language. The basis of grammar, or the standard to which the science is referred, is simply the usage of the best writers and speakers. English is the primary grammatical standard for the world today — in all venues of life: business, government, medicine, education, and so forth. In most countries where English is not the primary language, English is the language of second choice. For those of us who have had international students in our classrooms, although they usually speak with a noticeable accent, their knowledge of English grammar is frequently superior to that of our own students. English is a difficult language to learn because of its many obscure grammatical rules, which are fairly easy to mess up—even for native speakers.

Why is grammar important?

Grammar lays the groundwork for effective communication. Just as an improperly configured telephone wire can cause static during a phone conversation, improper grammar can likewise

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affect the meaning and clarity of an intended message. Grammatical errors come in many forms and all can easily confuse and obscure meaning. Some common errors are with sentence structure, subject/verb tense, punctuation, spelling, and other basic mechanics and parts of speech. Even something as simple as a misplaced comma can completely change the meaning of a sentence. For example: "Let's eat grandpa" vs. "Let's eat, grandpa." Grammar makes written content more readable and in turn more interesting. If it is necessary to repeatedly reword sentences while reading, the flow becomes disrupted and involvement in the story halted.

How is grammar useful in the real world?

Grammar skills are useful in every aspect of life from education to leadership, and social life to employment opportunities. They are equally important at home where children learn their grammatical patterns from their parents and family. This puts the next generation at an immediate disadvantage if learning incorrectly. Grammar skills are important to be an effective leader. Communication skills are indispensable to effectively give direction and provide assurance of leading ability. In addition, if continuing education is desired, grammatically correct papers will be expected from college professors. Proper grammar is also essential for understanding English as a second language as well as for learning a new language, since all languages follow grammatical patterns. With the United States being a melting pot of nationalities and foreign language speakers, hearing proper, consistent English is extremely helpful to encourage any newcomers in becoming fluent. This, in turn, aids native English speakers in understanding other dialects as well. From persuasive papers to resumes, grammatical errors immediately take away the intended strength necessary to acquire an ally on an issue or an invitation for a job interview. In both situations, grammatical inconsistencies make influential words less poignant. While correct grammar is a valuable tool for success in many areas of life, it is not used to create a gap in the social world. It is not a tool for segregation, but a tool to opening doors by being heard and understood more clearly. While correct grammar will offer an edge in a job interview it won't be so obvious as to cause a separation from the masses in casual conversation. In conclusion, just as rules are necessary in everyday situations, grammar rules are likewise essential in everyday life for clarity of meaning and intent. Communication is an integral of human activity. No human can live in isolation and to live in a society, we need to interact. For interaction between two people, we need to

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communicate. Oxford dictionary defines communication as activity or process used for expression of ideas and feelings or used by people for giving information. Hence we can say that it involves sharing of ideas and information between one people to other person. When a child grows, it is necessary that he is taught how to communicate as when the children are taught how to express themselves, they develop better communication skills rather than only by imitating. It is useful for their future as they have to go in the outside world. So we can say that grammar is important due to a variety of reasons.

How important is proper grammar in communication?

1. Important in all forms of communication: There are many forms of communication. Most people think of communication as primarily speaking and listening but it is far more complicated than it. If we go in detail, it is of four types that is used by people mostly- written, verbal, graphical and non-verbal. Further they can be sub classified as written into books, notes, letters; verbal into dialogues, lectures; graphical into sketches, drawings, flow charts and non- verbal is about the body language and sign language.

2. Improves skill of expression: Communication is a skill which can be learned. People must learn how to communicate well so that they express themselves in a successful manner. A child observes communication between his parents, other people around him and then imitating them. Grammar is the essence of every language. Grammatical Competence is also a part of the language competence. Hence to obtain an effective communication skill, the learners should pay attention to grammar.

3. Enhances accuracy: Grammar is very important as it helps increase accuracy. Grammar forms the habit in the mind of the learners and when combined with logic and rhetoric skills, it accustoms the learner to language accuracy and slowly, to accuracy of thinking. The rules of grammar help the learners to develop a routine of thinking in a logical and clearer way. Hence, when they study grammar, they become more accurate in the language. If you can't write properly, you can't relay your matter with accuracy.

4. Good grammar saves time in business: A key management skill is being able to communicate effectively in the workplace. If you have a good grasp on grammar, it ensures that the messages are delivered and relayed promptly. Good grammar reduces the confusion when an employee does anything, be it filing a report, filing a complaint, sending an instant message to a

project manager or voicing opinion in a meeting. When the message is delivered grammatically correct, it also reduces the time wasted in translation and in follow up of the message and this leads to higher productivity.

5. Helps in climbing the corporate ladder: Employees who have good communication fluency are more likely to succeed at their jobs because their writing and speaking reflects a level of professional competency. It is noticed by supervisors, by clients and all. Superior level of communication is one of the important factors that lead to a promotion or better title and pay in the future.

6. Grammar clears the message: Grammar is very important in a language. It is the glue that holds the pieces of language together. If the language is unclear and the message meaningless, it can be attributed to incorrect grammar. Hence it means that the person is unable to communicate effectively and the person who is the intended recipient of the message or who is reading the work may not get the real meaning. It will only increase the confusion in the mind of the reader.

7. Helps in saving the face: In today's professional world, everyone thinks that everyone knows the language. It also helps in describing about how one feels and responds to one another. IT carries a lot of importance in business arena. When employees use proper grammar, it helps them maintain a level of professionalism and also makes an impression on the colleagues and customers alike. It also reflects that the employee truly cares about his job, his responsibility towards the company and its products/services. When a speaker uses correct grammar, it is a sign of respect as they took time to polish themselves and forms a good impression on the listeners.

8. It is important even in digital world: People often think that bloggers and online article writers do not need proper grammar. Since they write in a conversational style and often misuse certain terms to create humour and sarcasm, it might be fine not to know the rules of grammar before beginning to write such blogs. However what people miss is that they use the conversational way of the language and hence take a bit of liberal freedom. However even bloggers must realize that mistakes can detract people from your credibility. Though people might understand what you intend to say, the truth is that people might not subscribe to your links, like your blogs if you make dumb mistakes. In such case, buying from that person will be out of question. Hence it always helps if you know the basic tenets of grammar, whether you are a personal or corporate blogger or a professional writer.

9. Integral for any business setup: Effective communication is vital for any business setup. Management, employees and other people keep each other updated about the latest news, reports and information pertaining to the business, even communication with clients, suppliers is vital. In such case, proper grammar is very important and it is a standard that the management should practice and preach. Mostly companies nowadays demand that the employees should have good communication skills to maintain the business's good reputation and to propel the business to success.

10. Helps to become figure of authority: The entrepreneurs need to assert authority over the industry of their choice. When a person asserts authority, it significantly increases the trust of the customers in him. Once that trust is gained, it is more likely that those people will buy from you. It can be done through detailed information about the products or services by using properly structured sentences. Just imagine, a person uses incorrect grammar in describing about his product, what will you think about him? You will think that even the owner is not aware about his niche area and is just guessing. Though it might be untrue but the entrepreneur will not be able to justify this to the customers and thus the first impression will stay with them. Hence to gain loyalty and their trust, you need to impress them since the very beginning.

11. Helps in increased competitiveness: Proper grammar boosts the campaign ads. When the advertisements are carefully texted, they will get more attention. Everyone knows that in business, popularity is very important and when the marketing campaigns are going on smoothly backed up by strong production team, the business is bound to get wings and stay ahead of its competitors by beating them.

12. Gives Credibility, respect, convenience and posterity: Any material which is grammatically correct indicates awareness and carefulness on the part of the writer. If it indicates otherwise, people will question its credibility and accuracy of content. If you are in the corporate world, underpaid employees who work overtime will resent receiving a document which is replete with grammatical errors and will earn them a rebuke from the senior. In today's digital world, everything is saved on the internet and any document that you publish will be retained forever in the memory of internet, along with the mistakes that it contained. Hence it becomes all the more important for it to be error free.

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13. Not much used in chatting: With the advent of technology and social networking, people have become lazier. When they text or use Facebook, Twitter or Myspace, they tend to use simple sentences and without focusing on the grammar. Everything nowadays is short and brief. Fragments of sentences are used and for them it is fine as long as what they send is understandable by the other person.

14. Gives edge over competitors: When writing on behalf of your organization also, it is important to use correct grammar as it can mean all the difference between the people trusting your expertise or questioning your knowledge of the matter of subject. If good communication is missed, you cannot work smoothly and normally. Even in corporate world, being able to communicate effectively gives the business an edge over its less articulate competitors. Poor grammar affects the marketing strategies and might even hinder the efforts of strengthening the relationship with the customers.

As seen above, one cannot deny the importance of grammar in communication. However there are still many problems being faced in the use of grammar. It is true that the way the sentences are structured and formatted, it becomes a bit boring to study grammar, but it is all worth the effort. People can use online tools to analyze their mistakes and correct them. However it is important to proofread the work before they use such tools. With the help of such tools you can learn the basics and also secure yourself a place in the highly competitive world.

What does research say about grammar and teaching of writing?

Research strongly suggests that the most beneficial way of helping students improve their command of grammar in writing is to use students' writing as the basis for discussing grammatical concepts. Researchers agree that it is more effective to teach punctuation, sentence variety, and usage in the context of writing than to approach the topic by teaching isolated skills (Calkins, 1980; DiStefano and Killion, 1984; Harris, 1962). As students revise and edit their writing, teachers can provide grammar instruction that guides students in their attempts to identify and correct problems in sentence structure and usage. For example, a teacher who sees that many students are writing sentences containing misplaced modifiers can present a mini lesson on this concept, using examples from student writing. The teacher can have students edit their own and one another's drafts for this problem. Integrating grammar instruction into the

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revising and editing process helps students make immediate applications, thus allowing them to see the relevance of grammar to their own writing.

To what specific aspects of writing does grammar contribute?

Because writing is a complex and challenging activity for many students, teachers should focus on the grammatical concepts that are essential for the clear communication of meaning. Research conducted since the early 1960s shows that grammar instruction that is separate from writing instruction does not improve students' writing competence (Braddock and others, 1963; Hillocks, 1986). In addition, research indicates that the transfer of formal grammar instruction to writing is not applicable to larger elements of composition. Through detailed studies of students' writing, Shaughnessy (1977) concludes that the best grammar instruction is that which gives the greatest return for the least investment of time. Shaughnessy advocates four important grammatical concepts: the sentence, inflection, tense, and agreement. She recommends that teachers encourage students to examine grammatical errors in their own writing. She also cautions teachers not to overemphasize grammatical terminology to the detriment of students' ability to understand and apply the concepts. Weaver (1998) proposes a similar approach to teaching grammar in the context of writing. She writes, "What all students need is guidance in understanding and applying those aspects of grammar that are most relevant to writing." There are hundreds of grammar rules but the basic ones refer to sentence structure and parts of speech, which are noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition and conjunction. Let's look at the way sentences are put together and the words that form them.

Basic English Grammar Rules

Some of the most basic and important English grammar rules relate directly to sentence structure. Some of these rules specify that:

- A singular subject needs a singular predicate.
- A sentence needs to express a complete thought.
- Another term for a sentence is an independent clause.
- Clauses, like any sentence, have a subject and predicate too. If a group of words does not have a subject and predicate, it is a phrase.
- If they can stand alone and make a complete thought, then they are independent and called sentences.

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- If they do not express a complete thought, they are called "dependent clauses." An example of a dependent clause, which is not a sentence, is "when i finish my work".

Subjects and Predicates

- Basic to any language is the sentence, which expresses a complete thought and consists of a subject and a predicate.
- The subject is the star of the sentence; the person, animal, or thing that is the focus of it.
- The predicate will tell the action that the subject is taking or tell something about the subject.

Basic Parts of Speech

Once we have a general idea of the basic grammar rules for sentence structures, it is also helpful to learn about the parts of speech:

- A noun names a person, animal, place, thing, quality, idea, activity, or feeling. A noun can be singular, plural, or show possession.
- A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun, like: "I", "you", or "they."
- A verb shows action and can be a main verb or a helping verb, like: "were" or "has." Verbs also indicate tense and sometimes change their form to show past, present, or future tense. Linking verbs link the subject to the rest of the sentence and examples are: "appear" and "seem."
- An adjective modifies a noun or a pronoun. It adds meaning by telling how much, which one, what kind, or describing it in other ways.
- An adverb will modify a verb and tell more about it, like how much, when, where, why, or how.
- A preposition shows a relationship between nouns or pronouns. It is often used with a noun to show location, like: "beside", "in", or "on". It can also show time, direction, motion, manner, reason, or possession.
- Conjunctions connect two words, phrases, or clauses, and common ones are: "and", "but", and "or."
- Mention needs to be made about other types of words that are considered by some, but not all, to be parts of speech. One of them is the interjection. It shows emotion and examples are: "yea", "hurray", "uh-oh", and "alas."

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- Articles are very useful little words that are also sometimes considered to be parts of speech. The articles are: “a”, “an”, and “the”. Indefinite articles are “a” and “an” and “the” is a definite article.

No grammar - no sense. Without grammar and punctuation, written sentences become, at worst, incomprehensible, and at best, only understood after repeated readings. Grammar is a practical and indispensable working tool that enables fast and enjoyable reading. Using the correct grammar (when we write or speak) is important to avoid misunderstandings, and to help the other person understand you easily. If our English is too full of mistakes, we will slow down communication and conversations, and find it harder to express our ideas and thoughts clearly and concisely. Of course, most people know this. And it's the fear of making mistakes that often makes them shy about speaking! A good understanding of grammar will allow us to be flexible when we speak English, and to choose the best way of saying something. So for example, we might be talking about a situation where the passive would be the best choice, but because we can't remember the past participle of the verb (or the correct structure) we end up having to use the active form. The more grammar we know, the more choices we have to express our self concisely.

Conclusion

Grammar makes written content more readable and in turn more interesting. If it is necessary to repeatedly reword sentences while reading, the flow becomes disrupted and involvement in the story halted. Proper grammar is also essential for understanding English as a second language as well as for learning a new language, since all languages follow grammatical patterns. With the United States being a melting pot of nationalities and foreign language speakers, hearing proper, consistent English is extremely helpful to encourage any newcomers in becoming fluent. This, in turn, aids native English speakers in understanding other dialects as well. Grammar skills are useful in every aspect of life from education to leadership, and social life to employment opportunities. They are equally important at home where children learn their grammatical patterns from their parents and family. This puts the next generation at an immediate disadvantage if learning incorrectly. While correct grammar is a valuable tool for success in many areas of life, it is not used to create a gap in the social world. It is not a tool for segregation, but a tool to opening doors by being heard and understood more clearly. While

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