

**THE ROLE OF VISUALS IN PROMOTING SELF-
LEARNING OF GRAMMATICAL CONCEPTS**
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INTRODUCTION

- English is taught as a second language in almost all countries
- Introduction of English since early childhood

One can not communicate without using verbs and tenses .

- Experimentation with several methods and techniques
- Difficulty areas – grammar (tenses) and oral communication

Common Methods

- Grammar –
 1. Traditional method – deductive method
 2. Modern method – inductive method
 3. Use of teaching aids, grammar games, activities
 4. Internet – audio and video clips
 5. This study- explores the use of visual aids for teaching tenses (time lines)

Background

- English – since pre-primary level in most countries
- College level – Good proficiency level
- All grammatical concepts are not clear
- Manage daily communication
- Need to revise and brush up knowledge
- More maturity – better and quicker understanding

The Problem

- Non-native speakers find English difficult, particularly tenses
- Generally used methods – inductive and deductive methods
- This paper is an attempt to present English tenses through visuals
- Specially prepared timelines – time lines help to perceive a tense at a glance
- Visuals enable self-learning – college-level students – mature enough to learn on their own

English Tenses

- Oral / written communication – tenses are necessary
- Relationship between time/tense and verbs
- Difficult to relate
- Visuals get fixed in the inner eye
- Similar to sight words

Why visuals?

- This is age of technology
- It is time to combine the old and the new
- The course can be implemented online or offline
- College students – sufficient maturity
- Understand better and more quickly

Significance of the Study

- Lack of confidence regarding use of tenses
- Visual can be remembered for a longer time
- Combination of the old and the new – offline or online
- Convenient – can be studied at any time in the course of the day

Objectives

- **Objectives:**
- Review of the confidence level regarding tenses
- Preparing visuals – time lines / pictures
- Implementation of self-learning programme
- Statistical calculations
- Results – observations and conclusion

Teaching Aids

- Visual / audio / audio-visual
- Visual aids are more engaging
- Stevick -“anything visible which helps your student master the language more quickly or more accurately...”
- Benefits – sensory exploration to exercising of the imagination
- Visual aids are not given the high value and serious consideration that they deserve

Advantages of visual aids

- They consist of charts, pictures, films, graphs, objects, diagrams, figures etc.
- They help to make concepts clear
- They save time needed for lengthy explanations
- Visuals can be direct or indirect
- Can be interpreted by illiterates

Method

- Mixed method – qualitative and quantitative
- Quantitative – experimental study – statistical treatment
- Qualitative – questionnaire in order to understand opinion of learners
- All material prepared – self explanatory
- Both hard and soft copies were distributed
- Pre- and post-tests – online / offline – choice of students

The Experiment

- Sample – 50 college students studying in the fourth year
- Questionnaire - to understand the level of understanding of tenses
- Single group pre-test / post-test design
- Students used visuals and self study method (12 basic tenses)
- Mean, SD and t-score calculation
- Results showed significant difference in the means of scores of pre- and post-tests.

Importance of Tenses

- Verbs are important in sentences
- There cannot be a sentence without a verb
- Verbs take different forms according to the tense
- Tense is a grammatical concept
- Tense shows the time when the action takes place

Aims

- Maximum number of students agree that:
- Mere explanation of the use of tenses is not very helpful
- Examples are more helpful than explanation.
- Inclination towards the use of visuals and self-learning through visuals.
- They hesitate to take guidance or instruction
- Prefer self-study - can learn at their own pace and convenience

Major Findings

- Visuals in the form of pictures and time-lines - as self-learning materials
- Students prefer learning on their own at the college level
- Something that they have been taught at school level but about which they lack confidence.
- Clarifying doubts rather than learning, hence the self-learning mode is preferable.
- The visuals can be used on screen or in hard copy.
- Visuals save a great deal of time spent on explanation and examples

Suggestions and Recommendations

- A similar study can be carried out by preparing customized visuals for all levels. For younger students, they must be prepared as teaching aids or teaching materials.
- A plan for all the tenses can help teachers as well as students to teach and learn the use of correct verb tenses forms.

