

Dialogic Pedagogy in Teaching English Grammar

Ashani Gunawardanaand Priyanawada Jayarathne

Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education

< ashani@sliate.ac.lk >

Abstract – Teaching/learning grammar is an expectant but challenging task in the ESL classroom. “Grammar” is looked over as dull and tedious by learners of all age groups. Thus, ESL classroom is expected to use an appropriate pedagogy for contemporary grammar teaching which contrasts with stereotype pedagogy which makes both the teacher and learner less encouraged and mind-numbing. Accordingly, this case study was carried out as a 15 weeks elective course offered for the students (40) with weak grades for the subject of English Language Structure and Usage in first-year semester exams of Higher National Diploma of English (HND in English) – SLIATE. Grammar is generally believed to be “undialogic” both by the teacher and the learner. Therefore, an engaging and productive pedagogy for teaching grammar was introduced incorporating dialogic principles known as Dialogic Pedagogy (DP). The activities such as games, group discussions, and role-plays were designed to deliver an added practice in identifying and applying grammatical concepts. Thus, the sample encountered more turns of responding in dialogues and discussions. This study established the importance of classroom talk which should be encouraged tactically as ESL teachers. Teachers’ proper management of the planned and accidental classroom talk (both teacher’s talk and students’ talk) provided enough room to learn and master grammatical concepts. In conclusion, suitably planned activities with classroom discourse techniques depict a positive correlation with accurate use of grammar by ESL learners. Yet some complications were shown when principles were turned into practice.

Keywords: Dialogic Pedagogy, teaching grammar, classroom talk