

## Teaching Grammar interactively

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### Objectives of the workshop:

I intend to have an interactive class of Grammar in which students can enjoy learning Grammar and they are involved in all stages of the activity. This atmosphere can be provided by introducing some interactive techniques like: drama, Jazz chants, Scenario and to use some activities that contain game like elements. So, how can we motivate students to get interested in learning Grammar and English in general?.

### Theoretical part:

To motivate students, we should consider the following points:

A)-**Variety is important:** A lesson should consist of many distinct components. In some lessons, these components may be the different stages of a single overall activity which is long but varied. In others, they may belong to two or three separate activities.

B)-**Activities, steps and goals should be understood:** The instructions should be clear and there should be a tangible or at least observable outcome: a student book or a performance, etc.

C)-**Game-like elements are usually good for generating interest:** Such elements include: a degree of competition and a goal which is about something other than getting language right.

D)-**Communication:** A major means of maintaining interest is the use of activities that require and encourage students to use the target language for communication of interesting messages.

E)-**Use of non-linguistic stimuli:** Such as pictures, objects, mime, music and sound. All these elements are really interesting if there are some poorly motivated students in the classroom.

F)-**Use of drama:** Periodic opportunity to move about, or at least stand and move, is highly beneficial to students in this age range and contribute to keeping interest up. Learners often enjoy "being" someone else, or being themselves in an imaginary situation in which they are motivated to participate and they become able to use the appropriate language for each situation.

G)-**The sense of humor:** It is important because if teachers create the right sort of atmosphere and often show sense of humor, more humor will come from students. Therefore, the task of learning becomes easier.

H)-**Use of scenario or debate :** The principles of debating are well-known, with participants putting forward deliberately conflicting views on a topic to inspire speeches and discussions. The teacher can provide students

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with the situations and they start debating and at the same time they use the grammatical structures in focus. For example, the teacher says: "Imagine you are the youngest child and you are debating with your sister about your toys. please try to use :do, does-don't and doesn't" in making a scenario.

I) - **Use of Jazz chants** : Jazz chants are created by Carolyn Graham. They are upbeat chants and poems that use jazz rhythms to illustrate the natural stress and intonation patterns of conversational American English. Jazz chants are simple and repetitive. They appeal to students of all levels and work with large classes. They reduce anxiety and motivate students.

**Practical part:**

In this part of the workshop, I choose some grammatical structures from the text book "English Horizons" to be taught interactively.

These structures are: 1-Have got--Has got ,2-imperatives ,3-can-can't , 4-How many, 5-simple past.

**1)-The structure 'have got'-'has got'.(using flash cards).(taken from: 'Grammar Practice Activities 'by Penny Ur.**

- I give each student a flash card. In each flash card, there is a picture, for example, of: an apple, an orange, a dog...

-I start asking them the following questions?

-who has got an orange? the student who has its flash card says: I have got an orange.

-who has got an apple? the student who has got an apple says: I have got an apple .etc

-Students continue talking about themselves using both the positive and the negative form of "have got". For example: one can say: I have got a lemon but I haven't got a pen...All students should speak.

-can say: you have got a book, but you haven't got a hat.

-I ask students to work in groups and to do a survey by asking questions about the items that the colleagues in the same group have got. The one who asks questions should record his/her colleagues' answers. The winner is the one who can gather more information about the items that his/her colleagues have got using the structure: has got. For instance: Jamal has got a pen but he hasn't got a cat .etc

-By the end, I'd like someone of my students to talk about his/her family members, or his/her clothes using the structure: "have got" in different forms with different subject pronouns. For example, one can say: I have got one brother, but I haven't got any sister. My father has got two aunts and my mother hasn't got any aunt. My parents haven't got any daughter but they have got two sons.

**2)The structure: can-can't(using jazz chants)(taken from :''Small Talk'' by Carolyn Graham**

-I introduce the jazz chant using the radio cassette player so that my students get an idea about it. I also present the structure "can-can't" using the jazz chant.

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-I show my students a piece of money: for example: 20 dirham. I ask my students: what can you do with 20 dirham?

-I start the jazz chant: "oh. Please /tell me /: what can /you do? What can/ you do?"

- I explain that students should answer using the form of jazz chant I modeled.(using repetition, stress, intonation ,rhythm and rhyme). They can answer: -I can buy/ a book/ I can buy/ a book. - I can go/ to cinema/I can go/ to cinema.

-Then: I ask them other questions: oh, please tell me/can you swim/can you swim?

oh/yes/I can swim/ I can swim. -oh/no/I can't swim /I can't swim .etc/

- I ask my students to work in groups and form a jazz chant using: can-can't.

For example: oh./my friend /can you shut /your eyes? can you/ shut your eyes?

But, excuse me /excuse me /I can not/I can not/shut my eyes.

Please tell me/: why can't you /why can't you/shut your eyes?

Just because /I can't see/I can't see /without/ my eyes.

oh./my friend,/you are /obstinate/you can leave/you can leave.

**3)-Imperatives: using drama.(it is taken from "Language Activities for teenagers" by Seth Lind Stromberg.**

\* I ask students to stand in the form of a circle or a line. I stand in the middle of the circle and I pass a box towards one student on my right side and another box to another student on my left side and I ask each of them to act a command ,for example:' close your books, please'," stand up please". The next student passes the same box to another one and asks him/her to act the same command 'close your books" or " stand up please". Students continue to pass on commands till the commands come back to me that I have to stop them .Then, I pass the box to the first student on the right and the first one on the left sides and the two new different commands " come here" or" go to the board, please". Each of the two students passes the box to another student to act the command "come here" or " go to the board please". Students continue doing the same activity till all of them act the two commands that come back to me, one from the right side and another one from the left side .

\*Then. I ask each one of my students to start a command chain and send it through the circle t to be carried out by the others till it comes back to him/her that he/she can stop it and send another command chain.

\*Then, each student says a command different to what he/she acts. For example, the first student says a command that the second student acts, but this latter should say another command that the third student should act, and so on.

\*For longer activity that serves as a closer, I can make things more competitive either by getting students to drop out if they make a mistake (in a word or action), or by collecting forfeits. In the latter case, students will

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need to do something (e.g. sing, tell a joke) to get back their place in the circle.

**4)-The structure: 'How many 'using a game:(taken from" language activities for teenagers' by Seth Lind Stromberg**

\*I ask my students to work in groups: each group is responsible to count specific items. For instance, group 1 is responsible to count "how many: heads. Ears, hands feet, mouths and eyes are in this group), group 2 is responsible to count: "how many: jackets, shoes jeans, shirts and skirts are there in this group"...

The winner is the one who can count these elements and may be others and finishes first.

\*Then, each group starts asking questions for the next group. For instance, group 2 can ask group 1:-how many heads have you got in your group? -How many hands have you got in your group?

- Group 1 is supposed to answer these questions?. The winner is the group who answers more questions.

\*Students can enlarge their conversation asking about other elements in pairs like: how many brothers have you got? How many sisters have you got? How many books, pens....have you got?

\*I give my students a box .On all its different faces, I write different questions using "how many" .Students work in groups, They throw the box to each other and whoever receives the box reads the question in front of him/her and answer it? e.g: how many days are in the week? How many days are in the month? How many players are in foot ball team?

- The winner is the one who answers the question correctly.

**5)-The structure 'simple past '(using the tape of" English Horizons" and scenario).**

\*I present the simple past using the tape of "English Horizons".

Students listen and answer some questions.

\*Then, I ask students to form a scenario (an open ended dialogue) using the simple past:

\*The situation given:" You discover that you lost your book the previous day. You remember that you gave it to your colleague. But your colleague denied taking it. You debate with your colleague about the book using the simple past. Please try to be ready to respond to any question or statement said by your partner.

**References:**

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3-Lessons from nothing.Bruce MarslandCambridge handbooks for language teachers.Series editor Scott Thornbury.

4-Small Talk.Carolyn Graham.Oxford University press.