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Previous School :
GPS, Ariyur

Student strength – 103
Teacher strength – 12

Grammar in Context

Background about your school: I used to work in GPS Ariyur; where I handled Class IV. The children come from rural background. Their fathers drink and do not go for regular employment. They are rag pickers. They don't care for their children, their health or wellbeing. Children mostly come from broken families and are being brought up by grandparents in some cases.

Some key areas of interest: Preparing charts, drawing, designing activities to children

Why I was interested in joining Teacher's Circle: My fellow teachers suggested that I join the Teacher's Circle. They said that we get plenty of new ideas and activities in the Circle and it is a platform to develop our teaching capabilities.

Summary of the different things you did last year: I gave plenty of reading activities to children and it has helped develop their reading skills. I used to give them reading and writing work during lunchtime. I alternate between English and Tamil reading and used books from APF for the same.

Experience Sharing

Classroom Challenge

Among all the subjects, teaching English was a tough task for me as the students belong to the rural area and have no exposure to English except during school hours. This case study is about teaching verbs and tenses to primary children in a way they would be able to apply it in their conversations. I plan my teaching in such a way that each and every child in my class is able to understand the concepts better. In this case I used different methods and approaches to teach verbs and tenses.

Everyday classroom interactions to develop Basic English

To my knowledge they were well versed in their mother tongue but lacked communication skill in English which is a common scenario across schools. So I started communicating with children in simple English sentences.

For example:

How old are you?

Which class are you studying?

What is the name of you school, name your family members?

What did you eat for breakfast?

These were routine questions that I asked my children every day. They were initially translated in their mother tongue to make them understand these meaning and slowly they were able to answer these questions. When I asked them “What is the name of your mother?” They replied my mother name is, my father name is.... Here I slowly taught them to say it with an apostrophe. This was how they learnt to say “mother’s name & father’s name” with an apostrophe. These conversations also helped me in teaching action words and various tenses. The grammar has to be in context and should be constantly used in conversation.

What is the importance of grammar in a language? It helps us to interact with others, convey what we want to. When we want to convey something to another person we have to string the words into a sentence and for this grammar is essential.

By interacting through questions the children learn to use the language and then when they are at an age when the rules can be taught we can teach the rules of the language.

Identifying action words in text

The only classroom resource available at that time was the text book. Now we can use the books from reading corners also.

To start with I gave simple stories and rhymes printed on a paper and asked the students to underline the words that described actions. I wrote the same sentences on the board by changing the present to the past. I also used rotating disc to differentiate regular and irregular words like play/played, eat/ ate. I showed some picture cards having pictures of some actions like cry, drink, eat, write etc. and asked the students to say the verb. I then gave the correct past tense for the words.

Using realia in class:

I also kindled interest among my students by asking them to do role play and asking questions with objects they were familiar with. Some characters like Mahatma, Nehru, were known to my children. So I produced a 10 Re note and asked them questions where the tense can easily be changed.

E.g.

Q: Whose face do you see on the note?

A: We see (saw) Gandhi's face on the note.

Q: When do we celebrate Nehru's birthday?

A: We celebrate (celebrated) Nehru's birthday as children's day.

Slowly they learnt the past tense through this.

Identifying words in past tense

I made my students to underline simple past tense words in the lesson "The milk man's cow". Finally to evaluate them I also gave some newspaper cuttings and asked them to underline the simple past tense words. Through all these activities I made my students understand the concept of simple past in a better way.

Graded grammar activities

I asked the students to list out the objects in the class and wrote them all on the board by spelling each letter and saying aloud the words.

Then I wrote the names of a few students on the board and called them one by one to do an action like eating, reading, writing, walking, jumping, sleeping, catching, combing, brushing teeth, drinking, running, pulling, pushing, closing, opening.

Every time a student did an action I will say out "Rajiv is pulling", Vijaya is eating". I repeated all their actions and made the children repeat after me.

I made them stand in a circle and played this activity of identifying the action words. This generated a lot of interest in class. The children found it energetic and interesting.

Worksheet for Past tense and Present continuous

I gave them work sheets where they just had to add 'ed' after an action word. They have to first underline the action word and then add 'ed' and fill the blanks and read it aloud in class. They were given another work sheet where they had to fill the gaps for the given action words by adding 'ed' and 'ing'.

Past tense from conversations

I asked them what they did in the morning before coming to school. They said brushing teeth,

combing hair, eating breakfast and walking to school. In the 1st day I took only these 4 actions and asked them to talk about it in simple past.

This I repeated for a week and I used to ask them every morning at the beginning of my class.

After this I slowly introduced them to irregular verbs. When a boy wrote on the board I ask them:

Who wrote on the board?

Who brought chalk from office?

Who drank water?

Who sang in the class yesterday?

Whose mother came to school in the morning?

I follow the rule, I present the example, I make them practice and then finally make them use in class

I understand that repetition helps. So I use this in class repeatedly. For irregular action words I highlight them on the board and make them focus on that.

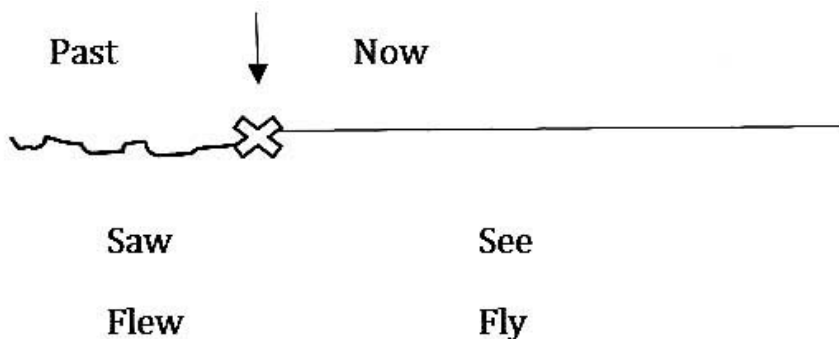
Go out and walk about: Experiential learning:

I took the students on a short walk outside the class within the compound, and made them take notes on what they observed. Once when they came back to the classroom, made them share what they experienced on the walk using simple past. This I tried in my class and the children enjoyed the learning.

They came out with sentences like:

I see crow

I see leaves, trees, dog.



Birds fly.

Then I converted the verbs into simple past

I drew a time line on the board to teach the verbs the children came out with.

Assessment: Action Word cards

I conducted a verb game to assess their understanding. I divided the class into three groups and gave them action word cards, simple present to one group and present continuous to another group and past tense to the third group. When I call out a verb, the children should look at the verb cards in their hands and come out and stand in a line,

E.g.

Look/ looking/looked

See/seeing/saw

This activity worked well. They developed reading skills through joyful learning

Way forward:

I would like to work closely with other teachers in the group and develop my teaching skills and I want to create a comprehensive grammar chart for the primary classes and give it to all schools as ready reckoner.