

**RESEARCH PAPER****Challenges faced by English Language Teachers in teaching Present Indefinite Tense to Primary Learners****¹Sehrish Jabeen* ²Dr. Zohaib Zahid and ³Sadia Ramzan**

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ABSTRACT

The present study is an investigation on the challenges faced by EFL teachers in teaching Present indefinite tense in Primary schools. It is exploratory in nature and was organized by using some characteristics of the mixed method research design. EFL teachers encounter various challenges in teaching primary students the Present Indefinite Tense. Firstly, the abstract nature of tense concepts can be difficult for young learners to grasp. Secondly, cultural and linguistic differences pose additional hurdles for EFL teachers. Primary students from diverse linguistic backgrounds bring different language structures and concepts to the classroom. Teachers need to be sensitive to these variations and tailor their instructional approaches accordingly. To address this, a study proposes these challenges requires a combination of effective pedagogical strategies, cultural awareness, and adaptability to create an engaging and inclusive learning environment for primary students grappling with the intricacies of the Present Indefinite Tense in English language acquisition.

Keywords: Challenges in Teaching, English as a Foreign Language, English Language Teaching, Learning Disability, Present Indefinite Tense, Primary Learners, Primary Schools

Introduction

Any language needs grammar to function properly. Its significance grows when it acquires second language. It is essential to have firm understanding of language of grammar in order to learn and master it. Like other languages, English has complex grammar structure with a number of subcategories, such as tenses, voices, narrations, parts of speech and so forth. EFL teachers can employ few strategies to improve the environment in the classroom and direct the student's focus on the subject matter. Such as games, transformation etc. According to Gerlach, Ely, and Melnick (1980) competent EFL teachers has variety of tactics at their disposal, and they must ready to choose the ones that will be most effective in inspiring learners to seek terminal behaviors. A structure is typically used to refer to a specific instance of grammar. According to Pachler (2002), People employ grammar when they alter words and when they relate them to other words to convey universal notion like tense. The fundamental grammatical rules of English languages must be learned by English language learners together with the practice of effective language communication. According to Ellis (1993) if individuals do not put emphasis on learning grammar rules, they will never be able to convey their thoughts and ideas clearly and precisely. According to Azar (1989) present indefinite tense is used to represent routine or daily action and to indicate that something was true in the past, is true now and will be true in future. Additionally occurring that "Present tense is used to show normal activities and it also state routine events." (Brewton 1963).

The study has been conducted to get the guideline and format for teaching Present indefinite tense to primary school learners, and also help to understand how to handle problems in teaching present indefinite tense through different teaching strategies. The researcher has observed that EFL teachers encounter various challenges in teaching Present Indefinite Tense to primary students. Primary students struggle with understanding the concept of actions occurring in the present without a specific time reference. Teachers need to be sensitive to these variations and tailor their instructional approaches accordingly. To address this, a study proposes these challenges requires a combination of effective pedagogical strategies, cultural awareness, and adaptability to create an engaging and inclusive learning environment for primary students grappling with the intricacies of the Present Indefinite Tense in English language acquisition.

Literature Review

In order to better understand the particular topic under examination, this will critically review the body of research that has already been done by experts in the field. The researcher will make sure that every piece of information covered in this study chosen carefully since it directly relates to the topic of research. Grammar is description of rules that determine how sentences are generated in a language. (Thornbury:1999). In his definition of grammar (Harmer:1987) he writes what happens to words when they become plural or negative or what word order is employed when we ask questions or combine two clauses into one sentence, it is grammar of the language. Grammar, particularly English grammar has been explained in various ways by various academics and linguists. The entire system of a language including its morphology, syntax, phonology and semantics are one of definitions of grammar given in the Oxford dictionary of English grammar. (Chalker & Weiner 2002). The way words are combined to form sentences is sometimes used to define grammar in general to correct sentences. (Ur,2006). Observations by the researcher that EFL teachers had taught the primary learners how to use the Present indefinite tense but many of them still unaware of how to put their words together into correct sentences.

A structure is typically used to refer to specific instance of grammar. (Ur,1996). Batstone (1994) said: Grammar has multiple meanings and dimensions. The basic concept about grammar is that it consists of a set of useful rules that help to put words together to produce sentences. It is evident that tenses are one of the grammatical rules that is used when we combine words to form meaningful sentences. We may argue that tenses indicate whether an event is in past, present or future. It can be seen by the structure of the verbs. In all languages teaching and learning are essential for the development of human intellect. Language facilitates the development of original thoughts and concept. By using language in daily life, we can discover new concepts, new words and new things. According to Ellis (1993) if individuals do not put emphasis on learning grammar rules, they will never be able to convey their thoughts and ideas clearly and precisely.

Present tense is one of the most common in English tenses. According to Pramono (2006) Present tense implies routine or current activities, such as feeling, an opinion, or the fact that something belongs to someone. There are various specialists who define and discuss the present tense in terms of its usage and structure. Murphy (as stated in Siswoyo, 2016) asserts that grammar is an English form used to talk about things generally. In addition, he explains that the present tense can be used to discuss the variety of topics in general not just occur in present, but also can be used to imply that something occurs frequently in a consistent manner. It doesn't matter if the action took place while someone was talking. Murthy (2003,) offered a different viewpoint and claimed that the verb is employed to denote that an action is now taking place.

The enormous teaching load of instructors, who teach many subjects to multiple classes at once in a single classroom, is one of the obstacles to successful language teaching. Although the issue relates to national and provincial policy frameworks, it directly affects

primary learners' learning capacity, instructors' focus on the subject matter they are teaching, and both parties' physical well-being. In Pakistan's public sector primary schools, teaching loads and multi-teaching assignments are both fairly widespread practices, which directly increases the difficulties experienced by language instructors at this level. The issues facing EFL instructors at the primary level must be highlighted and addressed. The researcher explores the difficulties that EFL teachers have while teaching primary children in the present indefinite tense:

Background of students: Majority of teachers researcher discussed with said that background of students becomes hurdle in learning present indefinite tense. They show less interest due to lack of knowledge. They get confuse in learning second language because of the influence of their mother tongue. They have less previous knowledge.

Limited Time for Lecture: Many EFL teachers said that limited time for lecture is also biggest challenge for primary teachers in teaching present indefinite tense. To manage over-crowded class in limited time span, and develop interest of primary learners at the same time create difficulty for teachers.

Limited Vocabulary: Primary school pupils face difficulty to understand and communicate in the target language due to limited vocabulary. To address this issue, teachers need to focus on to build strong vocabulary before teaching grammatical concepts in order to overcome this challenge. To make sure that students concentrate on vocabulary that is often used in conversation, teachers must include high-frequency words that are connected to the present indefinite tense.

Temporal Understanding: Primary students find it difficult to understand that time is abstract and that events can occur on regular basis without having a set duration. To assist students, understand the concept of regular behaviors, teachers should employ interactive exercises, real-world examples, and visual aids like timelines.

Limited Cognitive Development: Many EFL teachers said that it is challenging to comprehend difficult grammatical ideas because primary school children are still working on the cognitive abilities. Teachers have to exercise patience and utilize an assortment of pedagogical approaches that correspond with the developing phase of their pupils.

Linking Words to Actions: Many EFL teachers said that it is difficult for primary students to understand the relationship between words and actions. To further emphasize the connection between words and their meanings, educators must employ gestures, real-world analogies, and hands-on activities.

Diverse Learning Styles: According to many teachers' researcher discussed with said that various learning styles are seen in primary classes. Some students can do well by using visual aids, while others do better with interactive activities. It is very challenging for EFL teachers to modify instructional activities to account for these differences. In order to accommodate the many learning styles, present in the classroom, teachers have to use differentiated teaching, and to employ combination of games, visual aids, and hands-on activities.

Limited Attention Span: According to research, the short attention span of primary school kids is another significant challenge. Maintaining focus on grammatical concepts like Present indefinite tense is very difficult. To provide supportive learning atmosphere and to maintain students interest EFL teachers need to incorporate dynamic and interesting activities. This problem can be effectively addressed through participatory sessions laced with movement promoting exercises.

Awareness of Morphology: Many teachers said that primary kids have not morphological awareness. It is challenging for EFL teachers to give awareness to little kids about word structures and patterns. Prefixes, suffixes, and root words associated with the present indefinite tense can be introduced by teachers, allowing pupils to use morphological analysis to interpret new terminology.

Less Speaking Power: According to study many EFL teachers said that primary learners take no interest in grammar class due to less speaking power. They feel shy due to lack of confidence. It is very challenging for EFL teachers to develop interest of learners and to make them active while teaching present indefinite tense.

Material and Methods

The researchers have used quantitative method to conduct this study. Priority is given to quantitative method keeping in view the nature of the study.

Population

School teachers from various schools of Rahim Yar Khan have been selected to participate in the study.

Sample Size

School teachers from various schools of Rahim Yar Khan have been selected to participate in the study.

Tool Construction

A questionnaire is used for this research which was constructed by the researchers.

Validity and Reliability

The reliability of the questionnaire was checked through by applying reliability test and it was observed within the approved limits to conduct this research.

Data Collecting Technique

Simple data collection technique has been used in this research by asking the teachers to provide their Responses on the questionnaire.

Data Analysis Techniques

SPSS is used to analyze the data by applying simple frequency test.

Ethical Considerations

All the considerations are observed faithfully to conduct this research.

Participants

The participants are primary EFL teachers from various public and private schools situated in the Tehsil Rahim Yar Khan locality.

Research Site

In order to make research easier, and simple in gathering data, the researcher conducted the research in schools at district Rahim Yar Khan.

Results and Discussion

50 questionnaires were distributed, data was collected from 25 male teachers and 25 female teachers. All of the male and female teachers gave response in collection of data. The main tool used to calculate the results was a questionnaire. Frequency counts were applied to the data collected through the questionnaire.

Table 1
English Grammar is difficult to teach and understand

Sr.no	Gender	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Female	14	56	0	0	2	8	8	32	1	4
2	Male	9	36	5	20	1	4	7	28	3	12
3	Total	23	92	5	20	3	12	15	60	4	16

Table 2
Tenses are boring for students

Sr.no	Gender	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Female	6	24	4	16	6	24	8	32	1	4
2	Male	8	32	4	16	1	4	8	32	4	16
3	Total	14	56	8	32	7	28	16	64	5	20

Table 3
Audio visual aids are beneficial in the teaching of English grammar

Sr.no	Gender	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Female	10	40	11	44	3	12	1	4	0	0
2	Male	8	32	10	40	5	20	0	0	2	8
3	Total	18	72	21	84	8	32	1	4	2	8

Table 4
Overcrowding effects, the teaching of English grammar

Sr.no	Gender	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Female	6	24	9	36	5	20	4	16	1	4
2	Male	6	24	10	40	6	24	1	4	2	8
3	Total	12	48	19	76	11	44	5	20	3	12

Table 5
I am satisfied with the grammar in textbooks at primary level.

Sr.no	Gender	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Female	14	56	3	12	5	20	3	12	0	0
2	Male	6	24	16	64	2	8	1	4	0	0
3	Total	20	80	19	76	7	28	4	16	0	0

Table 6
Grammar is easy to access

Sr.no	Gender	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Female	12	48	3	12	4	16	5	20	1	4
2	Male	9	36	9	36	4	16	3	12	0	0
3	Total	21	84	12	48	8	32	8	32	1	4

Table 7
Grammar books are helpful for teaching to students

Sr.no	Gender	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Female	14	56	07	28	3	12	1	4	0	0
2	Male	11	44	11	44	2	8	1	4	0	0
3	Total	25	100	18	72	5	20	2	8	0	0

Table 8
Grammar is the hardest part of teaching

Sr.no	Gender	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Female	6	24	4	16	8	32	6	24	1	4
2	Male	3	12	10	40	6	24	5	20	1	4
3	Total	9	36	14	56	14	56	11	44	2	8

Table 9
Mostly students do not enjoy grammar class

Sr.no	Gender	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Female	11	44	6	24	3	12	5	20	0	0
2	Male	8	32	9	36	2	8	3	12	3	12
3	Total	19	76	15	60	5	20	8	32	3	12

Table 10
Current grammar teaching methods are effective for learners

Sr.no	Gender	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Female	16	64	3	12	4	16	2	8	0	0
2	Male	8	32	8	32	4	16	3	12	2	8
3	Total	24	96	11	44	8	32	5	20	2	8

Discussion

Simplified Language: EFL teachers should use simple and understandable language to give explanations because primary students have not reached fully developed language competency. Improved understanding of primary learners in present indefinite tense can be achieved by using technical language and segmenting ideas into manageable chunks.

Visual Aids & Accessories: EFL teachers can develop interest of primary learners by making abstract concepts more real and interesting. It can be achieved through the use of visual aids, flashcards, and art ideas. Establishing visual links through the use of the present indefinite tense when describing activities or things improves comprehension.

Engaging Activities: Playing games and socialization are the best ways for primary school children to learn. Learning becomes more fun and remembered when it is combined with interactive exercises, role-playing activities and games. By using real-world examples, these exercises encourage involvement and strengthen the ideas of primary learners. Repetition is essential for primary learners to internalize language structures as in reinforcement. Their grasp of the present indefinite tense is reinforced on regular basis through games, practice tasks, and classroom discussions.

Cultural Context: To include cultural context in language teaching helps primary pupils relate to the topic better. It helps them understand and utilize the present indefinite tense more effectively when they relate language usage to circumstances and contexts, they are familiar with from their everyday lives. Flexibility and the capacity to modify teaching in response to the demands and responses of the students are essential. Every student will be able to understand the material if the pace of the lesson is modified to accommodate individual learning styles.

Positive Reinforcement: Students feel more comfortable utilizing the present indefinite tense when they are exposed to positive reinforcement and praise in a pleasant learning environment. They become more motivated to engage in language acquisition when little victories and efforts are celebrated. In conclusion, an adapted method that prioritizes simplicity, interaction, and adaptability is necessary when teaching the present indefinite tense to primary pupils in an EFL classroom. Teachers may establish an interesting and supportive learning environment for young language learners by implementing these tactics. Essentially, teaching the present indefinite tense to primary school pupils effectively requires a multimodal strategy that takes into account several facets of the child's development, learning preferences, and cultural environment. A setting that is beneficial for language acquisition involves adaptability, innovation, and a thorough grasp of pedagogical strategies.

Phases of Sequential Learning: It is important to deconstruct the teaching process into logical phases. Simple positive sentences should be introduced first, then negative and interrogative sentence patterns should be introduced progressively. The developmental stage of primary kids is accommodated by this methodical approach.

Characters or Puppets Used: A humorous aspect can be added to the teachings by introducing puppets or figures that "speak" in the present indefinite tense. This method offers kids a model for appropriate language use in addition to grabbing their attention.

Interactive Whiteboards: Using interactive whiteboards in the classroom makes a lively and interesting learning environment. To help students understand the present indefinite tense, teachers must use interactive exercises, multimedia components, and group projects.

Theme Units: To produce a coherent learning atmosphere, language classes must be structured around theme units, such as everyday routines or interests. By combining vocabulary and present indefinite tense usage in a wider context, this method improves language competency all around.

Possibilities for Peer Teaching: EFL teachers can engage primary students in peer teaching by accepting volunteer positions as "language helpers". This helps to create a collaborative learning environment and also reinforcing their grasp of the present indefinite

tense. Incorporating peer correction activities allows students to learn from one another. Students can collaboratively review written or spoken exercises, discussing errors and suggesting corrections, fostering a supportive learning community.

Adaptive Materials: modifying resources to develop the interests and cultural backgrounds of primary school pupils gives teaching a more distinctive feel. Personalizing games, tales, or worksheets enhances the relevance and engagement of the learning process.

Reflection and Feedback: EFL teachers can continually evaluate their teaching strategies and get students input. It will help them to make necessary educational modifications. Primary classes and teaching tactics can be improved by knowing which activities are most popular for the student's awareness. A thorough and successful language learning experience can be ensured by designing courses to get the special demands and features of young learners.

Parental Involvement: EFL teachers can Foster a stronger bond between classroom activities and everyday life by including parents in the learning process by informing about classroom activities and can offer suggestions of how they can promote language development at home. Teaching primary children present indefinite tense necessitates careful blending of instructional strategies, creativity, and cultural sensitivity. Adapting teaching to the special traits and requirements of younger students guarantees a thorough and successful language acquisition process.

Analysis of Sentence Structure: According to researcher, some EFL instructors said that primary teachers should examine how sentences are put together in the present indefinite tense. To help pupils understand the basic components and their responsibilities, break sentences down into subjects, verbs, and objects.

Methods for Color Coding: According to researcher, EFL teachers should use color coding to indicate the various sentence components. Use different colors for different words, such as subjects and verbs. This visual tool improves comprehension and makes the visual distinctions between sentence components obvious. Introduce mind mapping strategies of pupils to help in information organization and visualization. To help pupils in remembering important grammatical principles, create mnemonic devices or memorable phrases. These memory tricks might be abbreviations, rhymes, or catchy phrases that sum up the present indefinite tense's structure.

Multisensory Methods: EFL teachers should involve all of their senses in educational process. To strengthen the connection between actions and the present indefinite tense, including practical exercises such as making sentence cards or utilizing tactile materials. Taking on roles Possible scenarios Create precise role-playing exercises where students must apply the present indefinite tense appropriately. This useful tool helps in closing the gap between comprehension of theory and communicating in everyday situations.

Exercises with a Journal: According to researcher, EFL teachers should introduce journaling to children as a regular practice in which they can make brief notes of the present indefinite tense. This practice not only improves writing abilities but also promotes the autonomous application of grammar rules. By actively identifying and correcting errors, this method can help students to grasp the material more deeply.

Conclusion

Many difficulties that EFL teachers face in teaching Present Indefinite Tense at public and private schools have seldom ever been mentioned. Although small number of these issues are known to the inspectors who frequently visit these schools, the majority of

the difficulties are still unrecognized. The basic needs through analysis of primary learners at the classroom and school level is frequently not done, and curriculum designers at the national level seldom have direct contact with the users (Triastuti & Riazi, 2018).

The study identified the challenges encountered by primary level male and female EFL teachers and explored how they can get better method to teach present indefinite tense to primary level students. Remedial measures to overcome the challenges of male and female teachers in teaching present indefinite tense were also determined.

Recommendations

The researcher has studied only on the challenges faced by EFL teachers in teaching present indefinite tense to primary learners, while for other researchers the doors are open to study other tenses and the challenges which teachers face in teaching tenses and which suitable strategies and methodologies are best for teachers to adopt and get appropriate results.

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