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## **The Importance of Homework on Students Learning Achievement in Grammar**

**The Case of**

**Students of Second Year LMD of English at Biskra University**

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master's Degree in Sciences of the Language

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## **Dedication**

In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

I dedicate this work to the most important person in my life: my mother who left us (God bless her). To my beloved father and my sister Zahra, who were my motive to finish this work.

To all my brothers, who were the sources of support.

To my beautiful aunt Hanane, who helped me

To all my friends: Aymen, Oumayma, Djouhina, Wahiba and Hajer

To all my family and relatives.

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## **Abstract**

The current study aims at describing the importance of homework on students learning achievement in grammar since it permits students to improve their grammar competence by using homework as formative assessment, it also shows the difficulties of students in grammar and how to treat this problem by using more practices. It contributes to students to give more value to homework for both students and teachers. The study is based on one questionnaire addressed to the students and of Second Year LMD to elicit their opinions about the importance of homework on students in grammar. The aim of the questionnaire is to get information about the importance given to homework by the learners. As for the sample of the study, 32 students have been chosen randomly out of a population of 300 Second Year LMD of English at Biskra University during the academic year 2019 /2020. A questionnaire has been used as a research instrument in order to collect data regarding the opinions of students on the subject. The analysis and discussion of data highlighted a number of findings. The analysis of the questionnaire revealed that most students consider homework as an important aspect to improve their grammatical competence and that they must try to practice more in order to get the grammar rules correctly because when they practice more, they can be competent in grammar.

## **List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

GTM : Grammar tradition Method.

ELT: English Language Teaching.

L1: First Language.

L2: Second Language.

DM: Direct Method.

ALM: Audio Lingual Method.

CLT: Communicative language.

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# **General Introduction**

## **1. Statement of the Problem**

Grammar is the basic organising principle for teaching/learning languages. It is considered an essential aspect in language the word ‘grammar’ is identified with style, and sometimes with the study of punctuation, spelling and vocabulary. So many learners face many difficulties when they learn grammar, for the reason of the lack of practicing or doing homework.

Teachers are doing their best to improve their students’ grammatical competence at the same time to fulfill the gaps of grammar difficulties for learners, students also they attempt to improve their grammar competence because they encounter many difficulties which lead their level became weak. Many teachers are resorting to homework as useful way to mastery the students’ level in grammar and to improve their grammatical competence. Here, homework is an important contributing factor in increasing student achievement, also it means that a helpful way to increase academic success and reflects good teaching and self-discipline. Students are practice more to get a better understanding for grammar lessons, at the same time teachers assess their students’ level by using homework and motivate them to do the homework correctly, it may be a challenge for students themselves.

## **2. Research Questions**

- 1) What are the main teaching strategies that English foreign language teachers use to reduce their students’ grammatical errors?
- 2) Is the homework important for the students’ learning achievement?
- 3) What are the kinds of homework that should be used by teachers?

### **3. Research Hypothesis**

If teachers use homework as a teaching strategy, their students' grammatical errors will be reduced and consequently, their grammar competence will be enhanced.

### **4. Aims of the Study**

This study aims at:

- ❖ Exploring the main teaching strategies that the teachers use to reduce their students' grammatical errors.
- ❖ Identifying to what extent the use of homework can develop the students' grammar competence.
- ❖ Identifying the different kinds of homework that teachers should use.

### **5. Significance of the Study**

This part contributes in demonstrating the importance of homework for students' learning achievement in grammar. It shows the difficulties that the students face in grammar. So, the importance of this study is to make a clear view of the value of homework in teaching grammar in classrooms as well as, to have an idea of how to deal with this issue

### **6. Methodology**

The choice of the method we will choose the qualitative method approach. It will be the more appropriate one to be used. The population of this study was first year EFL LMD students at Biskra University (N=360). We worked with 33 volunteer students to know their levels in grammar when they taking homework. We used a semi-structured questionnaire as a data gathering tool.

## **7. Structure of the Study**

This study contains two parts. Part one includes a literature review which divided into two chapters. The first chapter introduces the nature of grammar, its importance and methods in teaching, in addition to the difficulties in grammar that can face the students in learning. It also provides the teaching strategies that the teachers use them in the classroom as tasks, assignments and homework. The second chapter about the historical view about the homework; the definition; its importance and the types. Also, the effects of homework on students learning achievement. Part two includes the fieldwork which consists of the analyses of the students' questionnaire, besides the discussion of the results and the recommendations.



# **Chapter One**

## **Theoretical Background about Grammar**



# **Chapter One:A General Overview aboutGrammar**

## **Introduction**

This chapter will discuss the definition of Grammar from many perspectives and its importance, the types and the methods of how we teach grammar; also we will explain its role in foreign language teaching. We will talk about teaching grammar and we will move to grammatical difficulties its definition and types of grammatical errors. I conclude this chapter by assessing grammar, its types and the use of homework as a formative assessment.

## **1.1 Definition of Grammar**

Grammar is one of the aspects of the English language. It considers an important part in language learning and teaching because both of them need it in classes. The term 'grammar' is defined from different perspectives in numerous works about English grammar. One definition, which found in Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (2010) Grammar is the system of language for altering the structure of words and combines them into language phonology. According to Brown (1994), Grammar is an arrangement of structures which governs the traditional system and connection of words in a sentence and smoothes the progress of the acquisition of a foreign language and it'd be helpful for enlightening inclusive language competence (as cited in Deng & Lin, 2016).

Another definition was written by Ur (1998, p. 4) with a time span of twenty years, demonstrate some differences between these two views. Grammar may be roughly defined as the way a language manipulates and combines words (or bits of words) in order to form longer units of meaning (...). There is a set of rules which govern how units of meaning may be constructed in any language; apply these rules to express him or herself in what

would be acceptable language forms (Ur, 1998, p. 4). Grammar may be roughly defined as:

The way a language manipulates and combines words (or bits of words) so as to express certain kinds of meaning, some of which cannot be conveyed adequately by vocabulary alone. These include the way ideas are grouped and related, and the purposes of utterances (statement, question, request, etc). Grammar may also serve to express time relations, singular/plural distinctions and many other aspects of meaning. There are rules which govern how words have to be manipulated and organized so as to express these meanings: a competent speaker of the language will be able to apply these rules so as to convey his or her chosen meaning effectively and acceptably. (Ur, 2009, p. 3)

This means that the first definition is more focused on the rules and forms of grammar, whereas the second focus on grammar as a means to express meaning acceptably and appropriately. Also, the linguist Thornbury (1999, p. 1) suggests Grammar is partly the study of what forms (or structures) are possible in a language. So, he saw grammar as a science which studies all the cases that are possible in a language. Also, he (1999, p. 13) suggests that grammar is “a description of the rules for forming sentences, including an account of the meanings that these forms convey” and that it “adds meanings that are not easily inferable from the immediate context”. This definition is probably the most representative description of what grammar is.

## **1.2 The Importance of Grammar**

Grammar is more important and its importance cannot be neglected, because it is the language that makes it possible for us to talk about the language. According to O’Hare (1973) students, who are native speakers of English already, know English grammar, because they can recognize the sounds of English words and the meanings of these words and the different ways of putting words together to make meaningful sentences.

According to Hillocks and Smith (1991), using correct grammar is essential, because it tries to avoid misunderstandings and to let the listener comprehend the speaker. When the language contains some errors, this will be taken to lack of communications. Only the native speakers of English who can recognize the mistakes, but the second language speakers cannot use which preposition must use? Which tense is better? Also, the classes should be centered with meaningful and functional activities. The students must aware about what they learn, in order to have a great deal to the learning process and they must develop their classes with new understandings. So, teaching grammar contributes to making the students have an ability to get new information from the different activities when the students finished their tasks, they become more responsible and play an important role.

The Importance of grammar explains that grammar forms the basic structure of any language. Languages make no sense without using grammar rules. If everyone uses language without any grammar, the language would have too many variations and would be ambiguous and full of contradiction, e.g. using of wrong tense or punctuation can change the meaning of the whole sentence, which causes problems in mutual communication. It can have the effect that the speaker is not understood. In that case, the whole point of communication is lost.

### **1.3 Types of Grammar**

This part will deal with the types of grammar; we will mention some of them: Pedagogic Grammar, Linguistic Grammar, Perspective Grammar, Descriptive Grammar, Theoretical and Functional Grammar.

### 1.3.1 Pedagogic versus Linguistic Grammar

Seliger(1979) said that “the value and function of language rules that are formally taught” Here, we are talking about pedagogical rules as distinguished from linguistic rules. Pedagogic is a description of how to use the grammar of a language to communicate, for people wanting to learn the target language, but the linguistic grammar is a description of language forms, functions and its use. Also, it is meant as “a special type of people grammar, namely one adapted to the needs of a particular group of people (learners)” (Morrissey, 1983, p. 196). It is intended for teaching purposes (Odlin, 1994; Willis, 1996), and tries to provide the learners “the knowledge that native speakers unconsciously have in their mind” (Seliger, 1979, p. 360).

Pedagogical rules are broad formulations characterised by simplicity and generality, and sometimes carrying exceptions (Westney, 1994; Willis, 1996). They are prescriptive by nature because their aim is “to tell students what to say or write” (Greenbaum, 1988, p. 34). Pedagogical rules are facilitators for language learning, for manipulating that language effectively, i.e., nearly how language is really used, and for helping the learner to avoid “inefficient testing of false hypotheses” (Seliger, 1979, p. 360).

Pedagogical rules “are mostly not indispute, such as the general rules for subject-verb concord or for cases of pronouns” (Greenbaum, 1988, p. 34). They are formulated to be comprehensive for the learners and to give them “the means and confidence to generate language with a reasonable chance of success” (Thornbury, 1999, p. 12). However, pedagogical grammar may often be unsatisfactory because of “the difficulty (which is considerable) of integrating linguistic considerations with all the psychological and social

factors that must be taken into account in approaching a given group of learners” (Morrissey, 1983, p. 196).

Linguistic grammar is a complete description of the language and it is used for reference purposes (Seliger, 1979, Willis 1996). It “is on the whole inaccessible (i.e., not understandable or particularly interesting) to the average language teaching professional” (Morrissey, 1983, p. 196). According to Greenbaum (1988, pp. 24-25), linguistic rules are characterised by criteria such as simplicity and economy, they are dependent on the linguists' theoretical beliefs, and are inherently descriptive. Linguistic rules sometimes do not “coincide with the ways in which people store language information in the brain or with the processes that they use in producing and understanding utterances.”

Despite, pedagogical rules and linguistic rules are different from each other, they have some similarities both “conscious verbalizations of some abstract linguistic rule” (Seliger, 1979, p. 365). However, as Seliger explains, even if linguistic rules were closer than the pedagogical rules to represent the actual knowledge we have in our minds, no teacher would venture to use them because of their complexity. Linguistic rules are rarely consulted for decision-making about what to teach. What is actually taught is based on the teachers’ own conscious verbalizations of the language concept they wish to teach” (Seliger, 1979, p. 365). These verbalisations are based on the teachers’ intuition, their knowledge from grammar books, their knowledge of what they have been previously taught, and their knowledge about their students.

### **1.3.2 Perspective Grammar**

Perspective grammar describes when people focus on talking about how a language should or ought to be used. For instance, “avoid splitting an infinitive”, “do not begin a

sentence with and” or “it is wrong to say between you and I” (Greenbaum, 1988). They are observed especially in formal writing, and “may range from fairly accepted ones like ‘you must use –son third-person singular present tense verbsto ones like ‘you must not end a sentence with a preposition” (Tarone and Yule, 1989, p. 15). They “usually cover selected features of syntax and morphology and perhaps also of vocabulary” (Greenbaum, 1988, pp. 25-26). They do not provide only “rules for disputed usages in Standard English”but also include “all grammar instruction that stipulates what language should be used, what avoided, and whatpreferred” (Greenbaum, 1988, p. 30). The aim of this type is to teach people how to use language in a very particular (typically described asproper’ or ‘correct’) way.

### **1.3.3 Descriptive Grammar**

It describes how people use their language based on evidence from the knowledge English speakers have about their language as well as from samples of their actual use of the language (Greenbaum, 1991).Descriptive rules are “generalizations based on observations of the data”, andare “accurate or inaccurate, depending on whether they accurately reflect the data” (Greenbaum, 1988, p. 26). Also, it describes the language, its structure, and the syntactic rules that govern sentence and phrase constructions (Greenbaum & Quirk, 1990).

### **1.3.4 Theoretical Grammar**

The study of the essential components of any human language, theoretical grammar or syntax is concerned with making completely explicit the formalisms of grammar, and in providing scientific arguments or explanations in favour of one account of grammar rather than another, in terms of a general theory of human language (Renouf, Kehoe and Rodopi,



2003). According to Chomsky (1986, p. 6), theoretical grammar is a scientific theory: it seeks to provide a complete characterization of the speaker-hearer knowledge is interpreted to refer to a particular set of mental states and structures. The aim of this grammar is to present a theoretical description of the grammatical system of the English language.

### **1.3.5 Functional Grammar**

Functional grammar, “considers language primarily as a system of communication and analyzes grammar to discover how it is organized to allow speakers and writers to make and exchange meanings.” It focuses on “the appropriateness of a form for a particular communicative purpose in a particular context.” Such an approach is concerned with “the functions of structures and their constituents and with their meanings in context” (Lock, 1996, p.1). According to Halliday (1960), Functional grammar is based on systematic linguistics. Feng (2013) states that functional grammar works beyond the sentence level and it shows how the language changed by different context with different speakers.

## **1.4 Methods to Teach Grammar**

This section will deal with a brief overview of the most common approaches/methods of language teaching. We will devote space for the Grammar-Translation Method, the Audio-lingual Approach, Communicative Language Teaching and Task-based learning; The Natural Approach and the Direct Method will be briefly mentioned.

### **1.4.1 Grammar Translation Method (GTM)**

According to Richards and Rodgers (1986, p. 5), the GTM is “... a method for which there is no theory.” In this method, vocabulary lists, rules of grammar,

memorization are encouraged in learning a second language. Here written language is more important than spoken language, i.e. accuracy is greater than fluency (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Richards and Rodgers (1986, p. 5) claim that the GTM is "... still widely practiced, [but] it has no advocates." In today's ELT, practices such as translation, using L1 in teaching L2, and the teaching of abstract grammar and technical metalinguistic terms are evidently derived from ideas developed during the period of the GTM.

Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 7) presented several characteristics of the method.

We can summarize them as follows:

- 1) It is a way of studying a language through a detailed analysis of its grammar rules followed by the application of this knowledge to the task of translating sentences and text.
- 2) Reading and writing are the major factors.
- 3) Vocabulary selection is based solely on the reading texts used.
- 4) Much of the lesson is devoted to translating sentences into and out to the target language.
- 5) Accuracy is emphasized.
- 6) Grammar taught deductively.
- 7) The student's native language is the medium of instruction. It is used to explain new items.

#### **1.4.2 The Direct Method (DM)**

The Direct Method appeared towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and called into question the practices of the Grammar-Translation Method and its heavy emphasis on written language (Thornbury, 1999). Stern (1983) dates the dominance of the DM to the years between 1880 and World War I. Contrary to the GTM, instruction in the DM was

supposed to be exclusively in the L2. Within the direct method, an important principle was that language primarily is speech (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). Wasters (1984, p. 76) says “The Direct Method is of teaching a foreign language through conversation, discussion and reading in the language itself, without using of pupil’s language” and she denies the method of translation and the use of grammar. She clarifies that the idea of the Direct Method is that the learner should experience in the same manner as in his or her mother tongue.

Larsen (1986, pp. 26-27) presented the main characteristics of this method. We can summarize them as follows as cited in:

- Students need to associate meaning and the target language directly.
- The teacher introduces a new target language word through the use of pictures or pantomime not by translation.
- The syllabus used in the direct method is based upon situations (for example, the unit would consist of language that people would use at a bank).
- Grammar is taught inductively.
- An explicit grammar rule maybe never given. The role of the student is less passive than the Grammar Translation Method.
- Vocabulary is emphasizing over grammar.

#### **1.4.3 The Audio-Lingual Method (ALM)**

In the Audio-lingual method, the focus was on the oral skills, speaking and listening, rather than writing and reading, conversation and grammar were practiced as drills and memorisation. Yule (2010) called it “systematic presentation” (p.190). This is based on drills (move simple to complex), repetition and habit formation (Yule, 2010).The focus on communication and conversation becoming greater during the years of the direct

and the audio-lingual methods, these methods are similar to those of the traditional grammar-translation method, with a focus on drills and accuracy, and the avoidance of errors when it comes to communication.

The Audio-lingual Method is based on the following principles (Rahman, 2010):

- The structure is important and memorization of structure.
- Based dialogue.
- Language does not have to be contextualized.
- Language learning is learning structure, sounds or words.
- Drilling is the central technique
- Communication activities only come after a long process of rigid drills and exercises.
- The use of learners' own language is forbidden.
- The language is learned through the teaching of sentences patterns.
- Intrinsic motivation will spring from an interest in the structure of the language.

Those principles are applied by specific techniques of the ALM. As listed below by Dr. Saricoban in the Use of Audio-Lingual Method in Teaching Turkish.

1) Dialogue Teaching: The teacher presents the dialogue and then begins to work on the dialogue with the students.

2) Chain drills.

3) Substitution drills.

4) Inflexion drill: The teacher tells a sentence and students are expected to use another form of the word in this utterance.

e.g., T: I brought the pencils.

SS: I brought pencils.

5) Replacement drill.

#### **1.4.4 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)**

It believes that “communicative competence consists of more than simply the knowledge of the rules of grammar” (Thornbury, 1999, p. 22). CLT is considered to be made for developing learner’s communicative competence (Ho & Binh, 2014). CLT is one of the most recent and favorite in the field of language teaching (Ho & Binh, 2014).

Harmer (2001, pp. 84-85) summarizes the principles of CLT in the following points:

- Language functions are more important and significant than a focus on grammar and vocabulary.
- It principally seeks “to train students to use these language forms appropriately in a variety of contexts and for a variety of purposes.”
- It offers the learners a lot of exposure to the TL and enough opportunities to use it, which are crucial for students’ language development.
- It stresses life-like communication.
- Accuracy is not a priority; communication is more important than grammar.
- Communication (spoken or written) is focused on content rather than on form.
- It encourages students to use a variety of language structures, and the teacher neither.
- Intervenes nor predetermines the language forms students will use.

#### **1.5 The Role of Grammar in Foreign Language Teaching**

According to Richards (2001), a specialist in foreign language teaching, it refers to knowledge of building blocks of the sentence (e.g., tenses, phrases clauses) and how sentences are formed. Students learned grammatical rules and then applied their

knowledge of the language in translation between the target and native (Harmer, 2001, pp. 14-16). According to Azar (2007, p. 3), the role of grammar is 'to help discover the nature of language; language consists of expected patterns that make what we say, read, hear and write comprehensibly. As Azar stated that without grammar, people would have only individual words or sounds, pictures, and body language to communicate meaning. He said that grammar is the central heart of language, and is a tool to help learners' comprehension of the target language because grammar gives orderly rules of structure and word order that learners can create their own spoken and written discourse using these grammatical rules. In addition, Brown (1994, p.194) stated that without the grammatical structure, the use of language could easily become disordered and might not be understandable.

## **1.6 Teaching Grammar**

Teaching grammar is a practice that uses it by teachers to show the students how we can apply the grammatical rules and help them to understand the rules. Swan (2000, p.14) says "Knowledge of grammar is considered by many linguists to be the central area such as pronunciation and vocabulary revolve". Also, Weaver (1996, p. 16), in *The English Journal* claims that "Grammar is taught with the purpose of making clear to the students the orderly structure of their language..." So, here the matter is not about memorizing rules, participate in classroom and taking good marks, but when it comes to produce and understand it will be very difficult because of the lack of learning those rules and the application of them. As Weaver (1996, p. 16) states that if we teach rules, sometimes students manage to apply them and sometimes they do not.

The problem with teaching grammar is when we teach rules, we are never sure whether it works or not. Another definition by Corder 1973 "the teaching of grammar is intricately bound up with the teaching of meaning. It is not sufficient merely to enable the

learner to produce grammatical sentences; he must know when and how to use them.” He means that the teaching of grammar cannot be separated from the teaching of meaning, there must be a good comprehension of the grammatical forms, we must know when and how to use them.

### **1.6.1 The Necessity of Grammar Teaching in Language Learning**

Grammar is an important part of language teaching. As Swan says, “Knowledge of grammar is considered by many linguists to be the central area such as pronunciation and vocabulary revolve” (2000, p.14). Thornbury (1999, p.14 as cited in Neupane, 2000) says” in fact, no other issue has preoccupied theorists and practitioners as the grammar debate, and the history of language teaching is essentially the history of claims and counterclaimsfor and against the teaching of grammar”. Nassaji&Fotos (2004) pointed out the necessity of grammar teaching which are mentioned below:

- The role of attention is necessary to notice target form in input otherwise learners will fail to acquire it (Ellis, 2001; Tomasello, 1998).
- For any developmental sequence in language learning, second language grammar instruction is beneficial (Long, 1983).
- Communicative language teaching without addressing grammar found to be inadequate (Ellis, 1997; Mitchell, 2000).
- Norris and Ortega (2000) pointed out that explicit instruction has more significant results in comparison to implicit instruction and these results are stronger in excess of time.
- Actually, language learning is implicit in nature because of the slow skill of the form-function (Ellis, 2002).

- Thus, grammar structure is still helpful for learners if they get enough opportunities for practice, process and pertain until it becomes their inner language (Freeman, 2003).

## **1.6.2 Implicit and Explicit in Teaching Grammar**

### **1.6.2.1 Implicit Grammar**

Implicit knowledge is unconscious, internalized knowledge of the language that is easily accessed during spontaneous language tasks, written or spoken (Brown, 2000). According to him, it requires more time than explicit learning; its instruction is the teaching of complex information in an incidental manner, without awareness of what has been taught. When we ask a child “What is the plural form of apple?”. They would most probably say “I don’t know”. However, if we show them an apple, they can say “an apple”, and if we show them two apples that can again say “two apples” without being aware of the metalinguistic knowledge that they implicitly have. According to Brown (2000), the child implicitly learns aspects of language (for example, phonological, syntactical, semantic, pragmatic rules for language), but does not have access to an explanation of those rules explicitly.

### **1.6.2.2 Explicit Grammar**

Ellis (2004) defines explicit knowledge as "declarative and often anomalous knowledge of the phonological, lexical, grammatical, pragmatic, and socio-critical features of an L2 with the metalanguage for labelling this knowledge". Means that it deals with language and the uses to which language can be put, also it focuses on language forms presentation, explain the grammar rules and practice through drilling. In explicit teaching learners are aware of the fact that they are learning something, they try to understand the rules on purpose. According to Achmad (n.d), explicit knowledge is learnable; for example, when grammatical items are given to learners, they learn the items first in a



controlled learning process Explicit knowledge is also obtained through the practice of error correction, which is thought to help learners come to the correct mental presentation of a rule.

### **1.6.3 The Relationship between Grammar and the Four-Learning Skills**

Grammar has a good relation to the four learning skills because when we teach grammar rules, we must not teach it in a separated way, we must know how to relate it to the knowledge skills. The teaching grammar is related to all learning skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Firstly, grammar is relevant to writing, because it increases the students' motivation and improves performance in writing. Besides, we must know also that grammar is related to reading which aims to recognize the written forms and provide a vocabulary. Also, it is in relation to listening which helps the learners to recognize the spoken forms and the structure. Grammar enhances the speaking skill to produce well-formed speech.

## **1.7 Grammar Difficulty**

### **1.7.1 Defining Grammar Difficulty in Second Language**

Many researchers have defined it from many perspectives. Collins et al. (2009) define the grammatical difficulty from the acquisition perspective, so their study depends on the corpus aural in relation to L2 learning. They used two expressions « easy rules » which refers to those that tend to be acquired early, whereas « hard rules » refers to those that tend to be acquired late. Collins et al. (2009) argue that viewing grammatical difficulty from the acquisition perspective has the advantage that it takes actual learner behaviour into consideration. According to Biber, Conrad and Reppen (1998), it is a common belief to view grammar as a matter of listing and specifying the grammatical rules required for 'correct' speech. They explain that "rules such as 'don't end a sentence

with a preposition and ‘be consistent in the use of tense throughout a sentence’ are prescriptive rules that many students associate with English grammar” (p.55).

### **1.7.2 The Relation between Grammar Difficulty and Second Language Knowledge**

According to Ellis (2008) the grammatical difficulty in relation to implicit and explicit knowledge. He differentiates two definitions of grammatical difficulty (1) the difficulty learners have in understanding a grammatical feature’, and (2) the difficulty (learners) have in internalising a grammatical feature so that they are able to use it accurately in communication’. In the first definition relates to explicit knowledge, while the second relates to the implicit knowledge.

### **1.7.3 The Grammar Errors Teachers’ Corrective Feedback**

feedback is defined as the situation in which a teacher indicates the error location, but leave students to self-edit the errors (Lightbown and Spada, 1999). In addition, Erlam et al (2013) indicate that indirect feedback enables students to self-repair their grammatical errors. Eslami (2014) lends support to the effectiveness of indirect feedback after proving that it is more useful to help low-intermediate EFL students self-correct. Also, Jamalinesari et al (2015) assert that the EFL students who received indirect feedback outperformed the direct feedback group in certain categories of grammatical errors.

## **1.8 Assessing Grammar**

In this part we will deal with the definition of grammatical ability and types of assessment of grammatical ability, also we will discuss the definition of formative assessment and the using of homework as a formative assessment.

### **1.8.1 Defining Grammatical Ability**

Grammatical ability can be defined as “The learner’s capacity to realize grammatical knowledge in an accurate and meaningful way to convey different language uses” (Purpura, 2004, p. 89). According to this definition, an individual’s grammatical ability involves more than just language knowledge, but an ability to use that knowledge to communicate correct, meaningful messages. On their turn, Bachman and Palmer (1996, p. 67) view grammatical ability as “A combination of grammatical knowledge and strategic competence, defined as a set of metacognitive strategies such as associating and clarifying”. It is these strategies which in fact enables the language learner to achieve his communicative needs. It is also the most important type of knowledge that the learner should possess to be able to use his resources of grammar for some real-world purposes.

### **1.8.2 Types of Assessment of Grammar Ability**

#### **1.8.2.1 Formative Assessment**

Formative assessment is a concept that is more complex than it might appear at first sight. The basic idea seems simple enough – the central purpose of formative assessment is to contribute to student learning through the provision of performance information. There are two types of assessment. Formal formative assessments can be defined as those that take place with reference to a specific curricular assessment framework. Informal formative assessments are assessments that take place in the course of events, but which are not specifically stipulated in the curriculum design.

### **1.8.2.1.1 The Use of Homework as a Formative Assessment Tool**

According to the article, homework is a form of formative assessment, along with draft work, ungraded quizzes and other exercises used with the intent of guiding and instructing the student to promote higher-level cognitive connections.

According to Kathy Dyer (2014), “homework should be a risk-free chance to experiment with new skills. Homework should require students to apply what they have learned so they find out what they really do understand.” This means that homework is an activity to assess the learners’ level in order to become aware of their comprehension.

Wiggis (Kathy Dyer, 2014) says

In short, no matter the pure definition, I don't think it is accurate to say that formative assessment can't ever be graded. What matters – what makes a formative assessment formative – is whether I have a chance to get and use feedback in a later version of the same performance. It's only formative if it is ongoing; it's only summative if it is the final chance, the summing up of student performance.

When the homework is graded the assessment would be summative, but when it is not graded the assessment would be formative. We can say that homework is a formative assessment only depends on the assignment being given and how the teacher uses homework.

## **Conclusion**

To sum up, this chapter shed light on the first part on grammar, types of grammar, approaches and methods to teach grammar. We have made clear some related issues like its importance and its role to improve the level of students in learning languages. We have

also presented the teaching grammar and its importance, the two types of teaching grammar and the relation between teaching grammar and the four skills. We have also included the grammar difficulty and its relation to the second language knowledge and presented assessing grammar, grammar ability, types of assessment of grammar ability, formative assessment and the use of homework as a formative assessment. As a whole, we can say that this chapter is presenting the approaches and the methods which tried to teach grammar effectively.

# **Chapter Two**

## **A General Overview about Homework**



## **Chapter two: A General Overview about Homework**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter, we will define first homework by many authors and we will mention different types of homework (practice, preparation and extension) the positive and the negative effects of homework on students, and we will move to the point of parents involvement with homework, also we will talk about the purposes of homework, benefits and its importance, then the role and using homework and tool for learning.

### **2.1 Definition of Homework**

The word homework has many meanings by many researchers. First, according to Merriam-Webster's Dictionary and thesaurus is "an assignment given a student to be completed outside the classroom". Homework is generally defined by Cooper (1989) as "any task assigned to students by school teachers that is meant to be carried out during non-school hours" (p. 86). According to Cooper's (1989) definition, the assignment was meant to be carried out during nonschool hours, despite the homework out the school is still consider homework.

Further, broader definition of homework by DeJong, Westerhof, and Creemers (2000) states homework is "performing school curriculum tasks outside regular school classes" (p. 132). This definition means that homework as an application about the learners' lessons outside the classroom. Keith (1982) defines homework as, "the number of time students spends studying outside of class" (p. 248). This definition did not describe what homework is, rather it describes one specific variable of homework, which is time spent on completing it. Additionally, It was also clarified that "the phrase nonschool hours is used because students may complete homework during study halls, library time, or



during subsequent classes" (Cooper et al., 2006, p. 1). This means that the students need extra hours to complete their homework in academic places like the library, in classes.

Another related term to the research which is "student achievement" can be defined as a student's score on a standardized test (Cooper, Valentine, Nye, & Lindsay, 1999; De Jong, Westerhof, & Creemers, 2000) or a student's grades in their classes (Keith, 1982; Bryan & Sullivan, 1998; Xu, 2009). Despite all these different definitions, unless the homework is difficult to define and even more problematic to understand in the public debate.

## **2.2 Types of Homework**

There are three types of instructional homework; practice, preparation, and extension homework.

### **2.2.1 Practice Homework**

According to Rosario et al. (2015), this type focus on tasks taught in class to increase speed, study for tests, review work. Many rote skills are necessary for students to practice but teachers need to make sure students understand the concept or skill in class. If teachers skip the checking for the understanding task, the practice purpose of homework is useless and will only cause frustration for the student and parent. Rote practice should also be spread out over several days rather than doing a skill in one night (Vatterott, 2009). Teachers assign practice and preparation homework most often because it can be more convenient and less time-consuming. Practice homework is more often used in mathematics and spelling to increase spelling proficiency and fluency in math facts.

### **2.2.2 Preparation Homework**

It focuses on preparing students for the next lesson (Rosário et al., 2015). This type of homework is inherently linked to pre-learning by Vatterott (2009). Also, it helps students get ready for activities that will occur in the classroom (Homework, 2017). The homework is designed to encourage students' thinking about a previous homework topic discussed in class and prepare for future topics. According to (Rosário et al., 2015). Practice and preparation homework tasks showed an impact on students' mathematics achievement. Students were able to review the material covered in the future lesson from the textbook and write the main ideas covered in a notebook to help prepare the students for learning. Students would use the textbook to help focus on the next lesson and prepare for what would be covered in the future class lesson (Rosário et al., 2015).

### **2.2.3 Extension Homework**

It is frequently long-term continuing projects that parallel classwork. Students must apply previous learning to complete these assignments, which include science fair projects and term papers (Homework, 2017). It focuses on promoting the shift of previous learning to new tasks (Rosário et al., 2015). Extension homework requires a higher level of abstract thinking to occur. Teachers use this form of homework to encourage students to collaborate with peers and be more creative during students' learning. Real-life, hands-on applicable skills are used to complete extension homework tasks. This provides a richer learning experience for students. Moreover, Rosário et al. Noted that homework with a specific purpose of extension (promoting problem-solving skills) is valuable for improving students' achievement. The term "extension homework" used by Rosário et al. is very similar to the processing described by Vatterott that requires a higher level of abstract thinking to occur from previous learning tasks.

## **2.3 Positive and Negative Effects of Homework**

### **2.3.1 Positive Effects of Homework**

According to Cooper(1989) and Cooper et al., (2006), educators collected a list of potential positive effects of assigning homework to students. The positive effects are divided into four categories: immediate achievement and learning, long-term academic benefits, nonacademic benefits, and greater parental appreciation of and involvement in schooling. These positive effects may vary with each grade level. Based on Cooper et al., (2006) meta-analysis of research, the correlation between homework and achievement is irrelevant for elementary students. One of Florida's superintendents, Heidi Maier, has traded traditional homework with daily reading for elementary school grades because of the clear benefits of reading for students at these grade levels (Strauss, 2017).

Other potential positive effects described in the research (Cooper, 1989; Cooper et al.,2006) are long-term academic benefits (improved attitude toward school, better study skills and habits), non-academic benefits (greater self-direction and discipline, better time organization, more inquisitiveness, and more independent problem-solving), and parental and family benefits (greater parental appreciation of and involvement in schooling, student awareness of the connection between home and school, and parental demonstrations of interest in child's academic progress).

Additionally, Cooper (2001) conducted a meta-analysis of the effects of homework and its effects on achievement. In some studies examined, which indicated that students who did more homework had better achievement scores, whereas others indicated that those who did more homework had lower achievement scores. These results benefited students in high school and junior high. Students in elementary school showed very little

correlation between homework and achievement. The results are correlations, but that does not imply causality and it is not clear if it is the homework or the students themselves who create this difference. According to Cooper's research on the positive effects of homework, homework is beneficial as long as teachers use their knowledge of developmental levels to guide policies and expectations all in moderation.

Moreover, according to Trautwein and Koller (2003), homework behaviour is closely linked to three components of self-regulation (motivation, metacognition, cognition). The potential positive effects of homework are highly dependent on students' expectations of success and the value the student attaches to the task and the student's specific learning style. Despite the long history of homework research, (Cooper et al., 2006; Trautwein & Koller, 2003) the lack of smart measures of positive effects is that the homework variable is one of many influences on achievement being examined in homework studies.

### **2.3.2 Negative Effects of Homework**

The potential negative effects described in the research (Cooper et al., 2006) are satiation (loss of interest in academic material, and physical and emotional fatigue). Other negative effects described are denial of access to extra-curricular activities (in school and out of school), parental interference (pressure to complete homework and perform well), and confusion of instructional techniques (not understanding homework), cheating, and increased differences between high and low achievers. According to Cooper (2001), parents trying to help with homework can confuse students if the parents are using different instructional techniques than the teacher.

Furthermore, homework can lead to undesirable behaviour such as cheating, through either copying other students' assignments or having someone else complete the work for the student. Homework can also have a negative effect on students from low-income homes who have no educational resources at home. In the same view, Cooper said, "Low-income students are more likely to work after school or may not have a quiet, well-lighted place in which to complete their assignments" (p. 35). He was not alone in examining the negative effects of homework, Kralovec and Buell (2001) stated that homework along with recent demographic and economic changes can decrease family involvement time.

According to a survey in 1998 by Public Agenda, 50% of parents reported having arguments about homework. Thirty-four percent of parents reported homework as stress and struggle. In Kralovec and Buell's research, parents reported having conflicting opinions on homework because they want what is educationally best for their child but do not want homework to impose on their family life. Students often miss family meals and activities to complete hours of homework.

By the same token, Kohn (2006) examined frequent complaints heard about homework and further describes five basic themes. Homework is reported to have a burden on parents. Many parents return home from work and have to help with homework they may not have any educational knowledge of or the resources to help their child causing not only a burden but also stress, family conflict, less time for other activities and a loss for future learning. All of Kohn's (2006) themes described above are interlocked and affect a family's household. Family conflict tends to occur when students are struggling at home with homework and parents are unable to help with the homework. According to Kohn, "an hour spent doing homework at home is an hour not spent doing other things" (p. 15).

There is less opportunity for students to read for pleasure, socialize with friends, get exercise, and engage in extra-curricular activities, get adequate sleep, or just being a kid.

## **2.4 Parent Involvement with Homework**

Parent involvement, in regard to student achievement, is perceived by researchers to be both positive and negative (Cooper et al., 2006; Gonida & Cortina, 2014). An example of a negative effect of parent involvement is when parents put pressure on themselves for their child to complete homework and perform well. If the child does not perform well, it becomes a negative reflection of the parent. When parents are involved in their student's learning, some feel confusion toward instructional techniques, especially in mathematics, and feel inadequate to assist their child (Gonida & Cortina, 2014). Teachers appreciate any additional support at home with their child. Despite parents who do not feel adequate helping their child at home because of their lack of skills, teachers strongly encourage the positive relationship between child and parent. Building a positive bond and relationship between parent and child increases confidence and communication skills.

Also, parent involvement (Cooper et al., 2006; Gonida & Cortina, 2014; Van Voorheis, 2011) promotes a strong relationship with the students' school and positive communication increases. Parent demonstration of interest in their child's academic progress also promotes confidence and builds students' knowledge. When students are aware of their parent's involvement between home and school, the students provide more of an effort and higher rate of work completion, which optimally increases student achievement (Cooper et al., 2006). This research is contradictory to some of the previous research stated above from Schimmer, Bennett and Kalish, and Kohn. Parent involvement, communication, and supports between home and school are highlighted to be important in the success of students.

Homework practices in schools today can cause frustration, exhaustion, anxiety, and nagging by parents and teachers. The assumption that homework promotes higher achievement, reinforces learning, teaches study skills and responsibility is an inaccurate assumption for younger students based on the literature review. Research also concludes that there is very little correlation between homework and achievement for older students as well. According to Kohn (2006), the question is: “If homework really offers all pain and no gain, then why do we force children to come home from school and work second shift.”

## **2.5 Purposes of Homework**

It is important to consider the various purposes of homework. Two purposes of homework are commonly discussed in the research literature: (a) the practice of concepts covered in class; and (b) the preparation for upcoming material (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Markow et al., 2007; Xu & Yuan, 2003). Fisher and Frey (2008) recommend that teachers use homework for fluency building (providing the opportunity for practicing one or two skills), application (using skill to solve a problem, or applying to a new situation), spiral review (confirming understanding), and extension (using a variety of skills and/or resulting in new understandings).

In addition, homework can also be used as an opportunity for generating new understandings; this is a purpose for which homework is increasingly being used (Markow et al., 2007). Sparks (2011) describes the recently popular movement of “flipping” the classroom where students watch online videos presenting them with new material as homework before they learn it in class. These videos present the content and students are then responsible for learning the basics of that content on their own before engaging in related activities during subsequent in-school class periods. In addition to increasing content knowledge, teachers also intend for homework to help develop good work habits

and life skills. On the basis of open-ended interviews in one urban middle school, Xu and Yuan (2003) examined how teachers, students and parents perceived homework. Teachers stressed the development of personal responsibility and study skills as important goals of assigning homework. In the MetLife Survey of the American Teacher, 2007: The Homework Experience (Markow et al., 2007) teachers' top two objectives for homework were improving skills for the classroom and improving skills for life beyond school.

Furthermore, Markow et al. (2007) found that secondary school teachers commonly used homework to develop students' critical thinking skills and to develop students' interests. Lastly, Markow et al. (2007) noted that in the case of secondary school teachers, homework was used (25% of the time) because there was not enough time during class to cover all the material. This is worrisome because it suggests that secondary school students may regularly face homework assignments that they are inadequately prepared to complete (Markow et al., 2007).

## **2.6 The Role of Homework**

Many teachers assign homework for many various reasons, despite researchers have noted that most assignments usually serve multiple purposes. According to Lina Lelesiene and Rima Jasnauskaite, common reasons for assigning homework include:

- (a) Reinforcing material that has already been presented in class (National Education Association, 2008; Centre for Public Education, 2007; Pytel, 2007; Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 2005; Brewster & Fager, 2000; Paulu, 1998).
- (b) Determining if pupils understand the lesson and have mastered the required skills (National Education Association, 2008).



- (c) Increasing pupils' skill proficiency (North-west Regional Educational Laboratory, 2005).
- (d) Introducing pupils to new material the teacher will present in the future (Centre for Public Education, 2007; Pytel, 2007; Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 2005).
- (e) Applying previously learned skills to new situations or other areas of interest (Centre for Public Education, 2007; Shellard & Turner, 2004; Hancock, 2001).
- (f) Providing opportunities for pupils to identify and learn to use resources, such as the library, internet, reference books and other community resources (National Education Association, 2008; Brewster & Fager, 2000; Milbourne & Haury, 1999; Paulu, 1998).
- (g) Allowing pupils to use their unique talents and abilities to produce individualized and creative work products (Horowitz, 2005; Corno, 2000; Nuzum, 1998; Doyle & Barber, 1990).
- (h) Helping pupils improve their time management and organizational skills and develop perseverance, responsibility, self-confidence, and self-discipline (Hetherington, 2005; Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Hancock, 2001; Brewster & Fager, 2000; Corno, 2000; Wood, 2000; Epstein, 1983).
- (i) Improving communication between parents and their children on the importance of schoolwork and learning (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001).
- (j) Fulfilling school or district mandates, such as requirements for a specified amount of daily or weekly homework (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001).

## **2.7 Benefits of Homework**

Homework has great benefits for both teachers and learners. This article points out a number of benefits of homework: homework makes students more responsible and develops time management when the learners receive homework from their teachers, they immediately start to manage the time and also they try to complete all the assignments on time, additionally, they are responsible for delivering the completed homework to their teachers.

Also, homework is perseverance means that when most students cannot solve all the tasks the first time without guidance from their teachers, they need to try again and again, persevering until they succeed. Students learn self-esteem through doing homework teachers must learn their students' self-confidence on their students in order to avoid ridicule between classmates, and being able to submit the homework on time and learn them to raise self-esteem.

Correspondingly, homework teaches students how to stay organized, plan ahead and break complex tasks into smaller, more manageable parts when students do homework on time and in a manageable way, they will be organized and attentive. It gives students another chance to review class material during the course students who do not pay enough attention to everything, they may lose something. However, receiving homework to let students realize what they lose during the course. It also helps to solve complex problems and learn how to work independently student must work hard on their homework and do them individually when they do not have any help from their teachers, students learn that must do things even when they do not want to.

In addition, the teacher can gauge how much of his class was understood by his students when the teachers look over the homework, they immediately observe the points that were not properly understood by the class homework teaches students that it is best to

start early in order to do homework correctly and perfectly students must start early and every difficult task requires time to complete with homework, students are inclined to look for tips and tricks that help them become more efficient and knowledgeable the students learn how to maximize their output and get more work done faster and they must do their homework in

Similarly, the authors of theoretical sources point out a number of benefits of homework as cited in improvements in factual knowledge, understanding concept, attitudes to learning, study skills, self-discipline, and problem-solving skills. Moreover, homework improves academic achievement for any level of school pupils and what is more significant in homework is the fact that it develops study habits and makes learners autonomous in learning and in language learning as well. Additionally, homework helps pupils develop their good character and study habits, such as goal setting, following directions, organizing materials, planning ahead, and budgeting time, as well as strategies for dealing with mistakes, difficulties, and distractions.

## **2.8The Importance of Homework**

According to the article,many teachers assign homework to their students because it teaches them how to study and work independently for, they learn to use different resources. It helps students learn beyond the scope of their class. It lets the students gain a good sense of personal responsibility for learning. Darn (1997), gives us 8 reasons:

- 1) Homework is expected by pupils, teachers, parents and institutions.
- 2) Homework reinforces and helps learners to retain information taught in the classroom as well as increasing their general understanding of the language.

- 3) Homework develops study habits and independent learning. It also encourages learners to acquire resources such as dictionaries and grammar reference books. Research shows that homework also benefits factual knowledge, self-discipline, attitudes to learning and problem-solving skills.
- 4) Homework offers opportunities for extensive activities in the receptive skills which there may not be time for in the classroom. It may also be an integral part of ongoing learning such as project work and the use of a graded reader.
- 5) Homework provides continuity between lessons. It may be used to consolidate classwork, but also for preparation for the next lesson.
- 6) Homework may be used to shift repetitive, mechanical, time-consuming tasks out of the classroom.
- 7) Homework bridges the gap between school and home. Pupils, teachers and parents can monitor progress. The institution can involve parents in the learning process.
- 8) Homework can be a useful assessment tool, as part of continual or portfolio assessment.

According to the article, which talks about the importance of homework, it can improve the study habits of a student. This means that the student has the ability to manage his time at home. Homework promotes the independence and the responsibility of the student.

Homework can also make the parents get involved with the education of their kids, and also it makes the students have a wide memory and make them understand more

clearly the lessons that they are taking from the school. According to the article, there are 10 reasons why homework is important to student success. They are as follows:

- **Helps build responsibility:** all the buzzwords and phrases in the educational community are responsible to make students accountable and to take the owner of their learning. Homework helps students to learn and to take responsibility for their actions.
- **Develops work ethic from an early age** many children need to understand the value of homework from the beginning of an early age. That said, Homework can help students from a hardy work ethic that they will take with them to college and beyond.
- **Improves time management** Young children need their parents to guide them to develop this important skill. The goal for high school students means eventually learning how to manage multiple tasks to fit in their schedule.
- **Gives students confidence** many children need to try to solve their problems on their own and they must realize that failure is an important part of the learning process. Through working on math problems students gain confidence and will have the ability of problem-solving skills.
- **Enhance self-esteem** when children perform their homework independently, they gain confidence that leads them to complete their assignment, they build self-esteem which is important to everyone.
- **Teaches study habits** Homework to have the role of realizing the importance of practice, especially if their teachers provide timely feedback and offer tasks that directly relate to the unit quizzes or tests.

- **Can offer valuable feedback** Homework can result in meaningful classroom discussions or conference. Teachers have the role of checking their students' progress.
- **Gets parents more involved in a child's education** many parents to help their children on their homework also they have contact with the teacher to discuss the students' level because the parents have a great responsibility among their children to solve their homework.
- **The link between homework and standardized test achievement** according to some studies, there is a link between students who successfully complete homework and success on state standardized tests.
- **Prepares students for professional careers** Home assignment help children to prepare for the real world by teaching them to meet their obligations on time.

## **2.9Is Homework an Important Tool for Learning?**

According to the authors Hill, Spencer, Alston and Fitzgerald(1986), homework is a tool which is positively related to students' achievements, they emphasised that homework is a method of improving student learning. "So, as the pressure to improve test scores continues to increase, so does the emphasis on homework" (p. 58). The authors indicated that particularly encouraging signs were that a variety of types of homework were suggested, and the focus of meaningful, creative, and high-level thinking endeavours... and away from tedious busy work and drill (Hill, Spencer, et. al, 1986, p. 68).

Additionally, Homework is seen as a valuable tool for teaching, because it allows the students to learn and practise more with the teacher. Also, according to the author, the homework is important as a work completed in class, so it is extra work which contributes

to developing the student capacity to learn. Student achievement depends upon close attention to homework. When doing homework student can develop their critical thinking and their problem-solving skills, also they can develop their interests, goals and learn how to analyze, focus their attention and organize their thoughts. In addition, when children take homework in a good manner will transfer into higher grades, self-esteem and the acquisition of knowledge, also they acquire the professionalism and personality.

## **2.10 History of Homework**

The subject of homework has changed over the years and this subject has debated throughout history (Gill & Schlossman, 1996). In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, America had a strong anti-homework movement. Homework is viewed as a tool which related to students' achievement. According to Wildman, in 1996, the National Education Association issued this statement:

It is generally recommended (a) that children in the early elementary school have no homework specifically designed by the teacher, (b) that limited amounts of homework—not more than an hour a day—be introduced during the upper elementary school and junior high years ; (c) that homework be limited to four nights a week; and (d) that in secondary school no more than one and a half hours a night be expected. (as cited in Vatterott, 2009, p. 6)

In 1957, the historical events of the Cold War and the Russian's launching the Spunik1 Satellite which deduced homework levels higher. Levels inclined in the mid-1960s and 1970s but again rose in global competitive movement in the 1980s with Japan resulting in an increased education shift toward more standards and homework for students (Cooper et al., 2006; Eren & Henderson, 2011).

Moreover, by the 1990s, the aim of homework levels is to rise in the resulting of the education standard demands that were led to increased academic achievement. With the increased demands of education, standards came higher amounts of homework. This means to improve the quality of the labour force in the United States. At this time, the first districts who began to adopt the mandatory homework policies were the United States schools(Eren& Henderson, 2011). By the late 1990s, the homework began to change into the anti-homework focus despite the research conducted by leading expert Harris Cooper.

In 1998, the American Educational Research Association made a meeting on homework practices and the latest research about homework. This study found that students could be impacted either positively or negatively by Homework which depends on their individual or family circumstances. The reason for further research was the change of the opinions of parents and the beliefs of researchers about the lack of evidence between homework and academic achievement (Vatterott, 2009).

Additionally, another significant event to impact the homework trend was the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. In 2002, “No Child Left Behind Act” was signed into law by George W. Bush to increase academic standards and raise school accountability (Bogin& Nguyen-Hoang,2014). Schools who received title I funding and failed to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) performance targets for two consecutive years were considered “failing” and could potentially be shut down based on performance. Over time this educational policy and the increase in standards and accountability was proven to cause more of a negative consequence to students, families, teachers, and school districts than what was intended by the “No Child Left Behind Act.” The act intended to target at-risk students so they would not be “left behind.” Unfortunately, the act did not successfully



help students at-risk the way the policy was intended and new policies have since been put into place (Bogin& Nguyen-Hoang, 2014).

The culture of homework and how it has developed over the last 100 years is based on five beliefs about children and learning. Vatterott (2009) focused on five beliefs that are based mostly on faith, tradition, and/or moral judgment versus research and facts. These beliefs are:

**Belief #1:** The role of the school is to extend learning beyond the classroom.

**Belief #2:** Intellectual activity is intrinsically more valuable than nonintellectual activity.

**Belief #3:** Homework teaches responsibility.

**Belief #4:** Lots of homework is a sign of a rigorous curriculum.

**Belief #5:** Good teachers give homework; good students do their homework(pp.10-13).

Hence, today's homework culture in some schools is a mixture of very old philosophies consisting of who teachers believe students are, who teachers want students to be, and how teachers think they can control students (Vatterott, 2009).The subject of homework,despite the swing over the last hundred years, pro-homework and anti-homework attitudes are not a new issue. Its trends and attitudes have historically reflected in society and the educational philosophy at the time.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, homework is considered as an important tool to help the students to improve their grammatical competence and to master the language. This chapter deals with firstly, the definition of homework, then the types of homework, positive and negative

homework, also parents involvement with homework, purposes of homework, the role of homework, benefits of homework and its importance, Is homework an important tool for learning. Finally, the history of homework.

# **Chapter Three**

## **Data Analysis and Discussion of Results**



## **Chapter Three: Data Analysis and Discussion of Results**

### **Introduction**

The focus of the present study is to investigate the importance of homework on students' learning achievement in grammar. A data-gathering tool was used to investigate the most grammatical difficulties that can face students and using homework as a tool to develop their levels in grammar.

This chapter is concerned with research instruments, data collection and analysis, It is based on a qualitative method to combine findings of the importance of homework on students learning achievement in grammar from the questionnaire for students, in order to take their opinion about the research.

### **3.1 Students' Questionnaire**

The present section is about describing the questionnaire and the aims, besides of the analysis of the results obtained from it.

#### **3.1.1 Description of the Students' Questionnaire**

In this study, we have selected the questionnaire for students as a tool of data collection that aims for the importance of grammar for students and the most grammar difficulties that face them, also to take their opinions about using homework as a method to develop their grammar. It contains 19 questions divided into three sections. The first section is devoted to students' general information; it consists of three questions: the gender of students, the students' levels in English and the reason behind choosing English. This section aims at collecting information about the level of students in English and the reasons that choosing English. The second section is concerned with the grammatical

competence of the students; it contains seven questions that aim to know the most grammar difficulty which can face students. The third section contains nine questions which concerned the role of homework; it aims to collect data concerning.

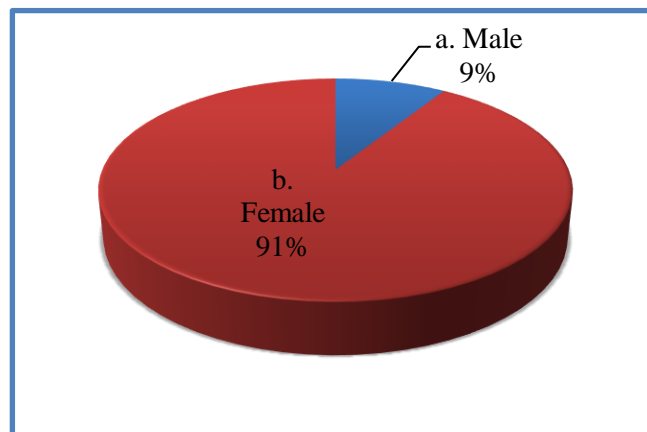
### 2.3.2 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

#### Section One: General Information

**Item 1.** Please, specify your gender:

Gender	Participants	Percentage
a. Male	3	9%
b. Female	29	91
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.1:** Students' Gender



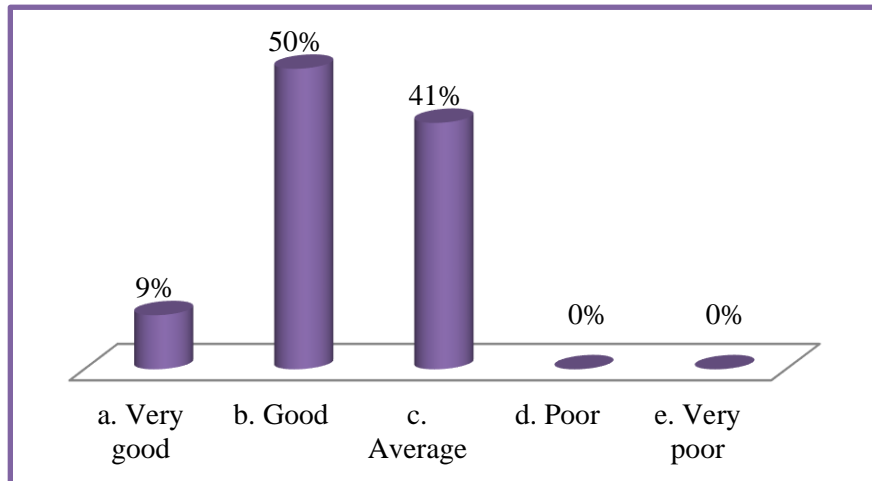
**Figure 3.1** Students' Gender

From table 3 and figure 3, it is noticed that the number of female students is more than the male ones. Results show that 29 participants who represent 91% are female students, and 3 participants who represent 9% are male students. This question aims to investigate the gender of students.

**Item 2.** How do you consider your level in English?

Option	Participants	Percentage
a. Very good	3	9%
b. Good	16	50%
c. Average	13	41%
d. Poor	0	0%
e. Very poor	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.2:** Students' Level in English



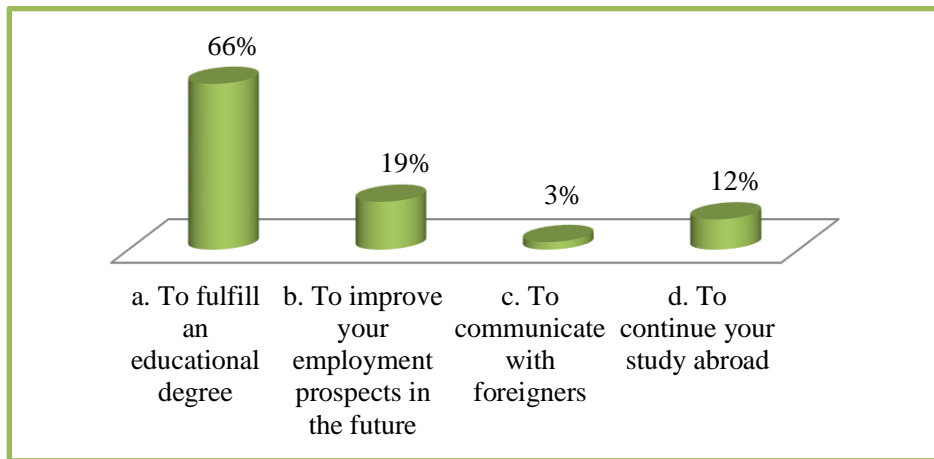
**Figure 3.2:** Students' Level in English

From table 3.2 and figure 3.2 shows that the students' level in English. It is noticed that most students which their level is good, it represents 50%, while 41% of students their level is average and 9% represents students who their level is very good. There are many students who their level is poor and very poor. The aim of this question is to know the level of students in English.

**Item 3.** Why did you choose to study English? (you may check more than one)

Option	Participants	Percentage
a. To fulfil an educational degree	21	66%
b. To improve your employment prospects in the future	6	19%
c. To communicate with foreigners	1	3%
d. To continue your study abroad	4	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.3:** Students' reason(s) to study English



**Figure 3.3:** Students' reason(s) to study English

According to table 3.3 and figure 3.3 which are about the reasons of students to study English 66% represents of students who choose to fulfil an educational degree. 19% represents students who select to improve your employment prospects in the future. However, students who choose to continue a study abroad are 12% of the participants. In the other hand, To communicate with foreigners represented by 3%.

**Others**

- To be a good teacher



- I love English
- I love English and teaching
- It is a passion

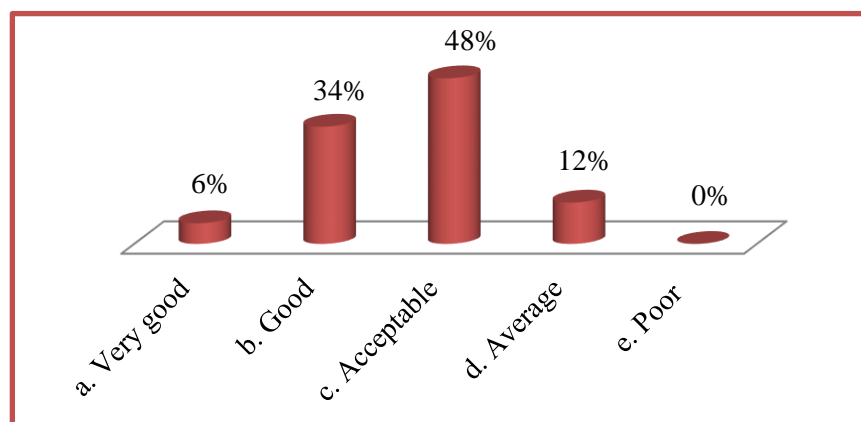
From the above answers, students add some answers most of them select to add that they want to be a good teacher, while some of them, they love English and teaching at the same time. Students chose English for their passion.

## Section Two: Grammatical Competence

**Item 4.** How do you evaluate your grammatical competence?

Option	Participants	Percentage
a. Very good	2	6%
b. Good	11	34%
c. Acceptable	15	48%
d. Average	4	12%
e. Poor	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.4:** Students' evaluation of their grammatical competence



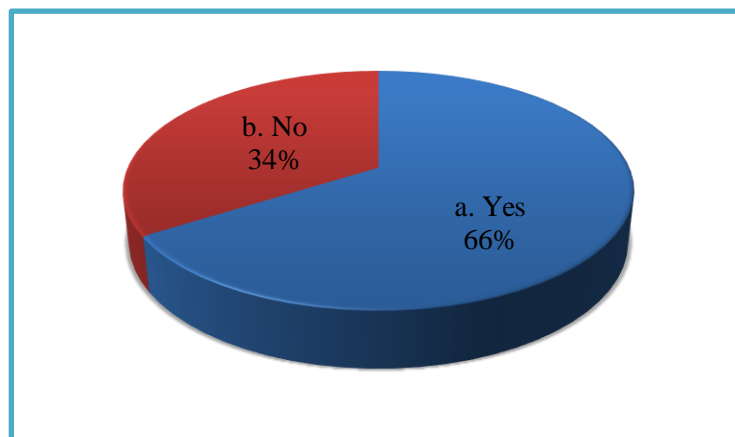
**Figure 3.4:** Students' evaluation of their grammatical competence

Concerning the evaluation of students of grammatical competence, 48% of students are acceptable. While 34% of participants are good in grammar competence and also have a good background in grammar. However, 12% of students their grammar competence is average, and 6% of students are very good at grammar. None of the students is poor in grammar. The aim of this question is to know the students' grammar competence.

**Item 5.** Do you enjoy grammar lessons?

Option	Participants	Percentage
a. Yes	21	66%
b. No	11	34%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.5:** Students' enjoyment in grammar lessons



**Figure 3.5:** Students' enjoyment in grammar lessons

Results obtained from table 3.5 and figure 3.5 show 21 students, which represent 66%, that have the side of enjoyment in grammar lessons and they answered by "Yes", While 11 students, which represent 34%, that don't have any tendency among lessons in grammar and they answered by "No".

## Students' justifications

### a) For "Yes"

- Because this the only thing that I love in English
- Fun sessions can be challenging some times that is why I think it is good
- I don't enjoy lessons but I do enjoy the takes because they are so interesting
- Well. we have the opportunity to discuss during the grammar lesson, not like other sessions
- I consider grammar a very important module because it is the basis of correct English.
- It's tricky and challenging. Grammar is never the same therefore it's entertaining there's always something new and you never get bored.
- Because I'm good at grammar
- Because this is the most aspect of language, I enjoy
- I like grammar as a module so it doesn't matter how the lessons are taught
- To know the rules of English
- Fun
- Because it builds my knowledge in the English language
- It is very helpful because it helps construct sentences that are understandable in order to communicate
- I like it coz it shows me the reason behind each language structure I use.
- It helps a lot in many different aspects
- They are easy
- Learning grammar basically means learning the language.

- It is easy, all about rules and how to apply them, it is like something scientific
- Because I find it somehow easy to practice
- Because it is very important to master any language.
- Exited to know how to construct correct sentences

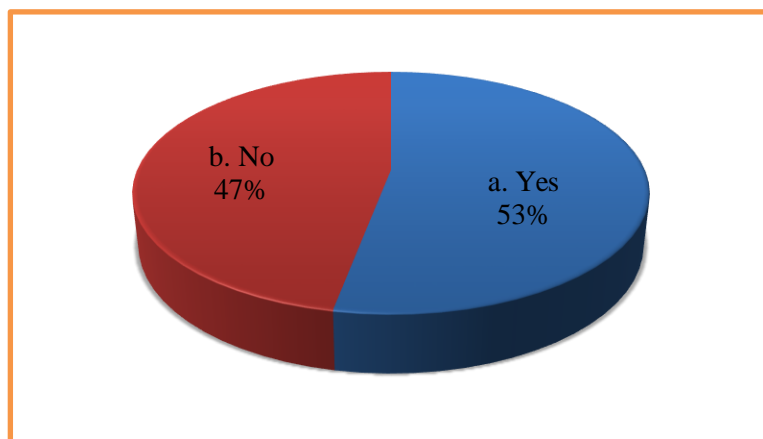
**b) For “No”**

- I hate grammar
- It is boring because I already know the lessons
- We used to study grammar using the traditional way, which was pure boring
- Because we study things we already know plus teachers who taught us that time were not competent enough

**Item 6.** Do you think that the time devoted to teaching grammar is sufficient?

Option	Participants	Percentage
<b>a.</b> Yes	17	53%
<b>b.</b> No	15	47%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.6:** The sufficiency of the time devoted to teaching grammar



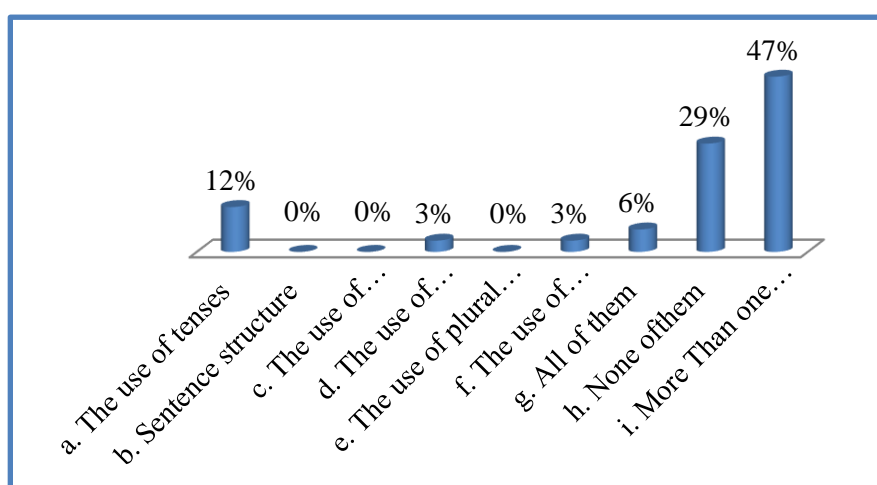
**Figure 3.6:** The sufficiency of the time devoted to teaching grammar

According to table 3.6 and figure 3.6, 17 students (53%) agree that the time devoted to teaching grammar is sufficient. However, 15 students (15%) disagree. It is noticed that most students think that the time devoted to teaching grammar is sufficient, however, some of them think that the time devoted to teaching grammar is not sufficient.

**Item 7.** Which of the following aspects do you think you are weak in and you would like to work more on them? (You may check more than one)

Option	Participants	Percentage
a. The use of tenses	4	12%
b. Sentence structure	0	0%
c. The use of different types of phrases and sentences	0	0%
d. The use of articles and prepositions	1	3%
e. The use of plural markers	0	0%
f. The use of adverbs instead of adjectives	1	3%
g. All of them	2	6%
h. None of them	9	29%
i. More Than one answer	15	47%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.7:** Students' weakness(es) in some grammatical aspects



**Figure 3.7:** Students' weakness (es) in some grammatical aspects

From their answers, it is found that there are students who are weak in some grammatical aspects. 4 participants represent 12% who are weak in the use of tenses to write a paragraph or essay. While one student represents 3% who is weak in the use of articles and prepositions, also one student represents 3% who is weak in the use of adverbs instead of adjectives.

**Others**

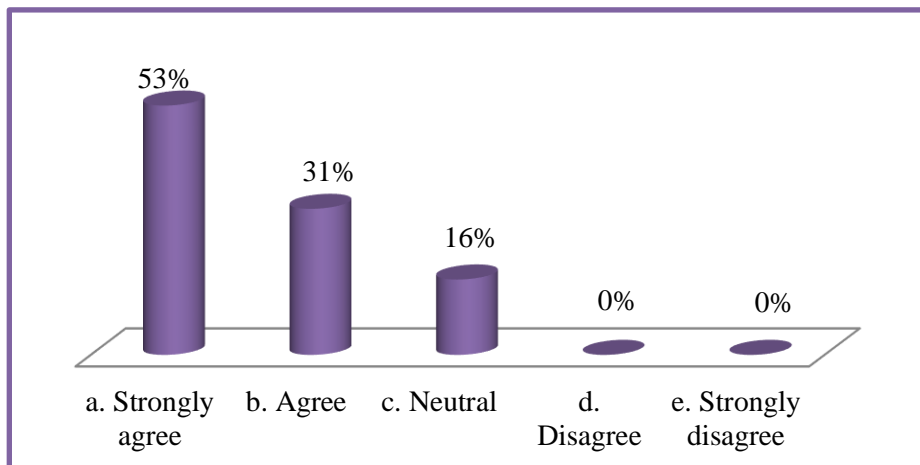
- My only issue is identifying/naming the different elements

Another answer, There are students who are weak in how identifying the different elements, in other words, they are confused to name elements.

**Item 8.** Is It important for you to practice your grammar?

Option	Participants	Percentage
a. Strongly agree	17	53%
b. Agree	10	31%
c. Neutral	5	16%
d. Disagree	0	0%
e. Strongly disagree	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.8:** The importance of practicing grammar



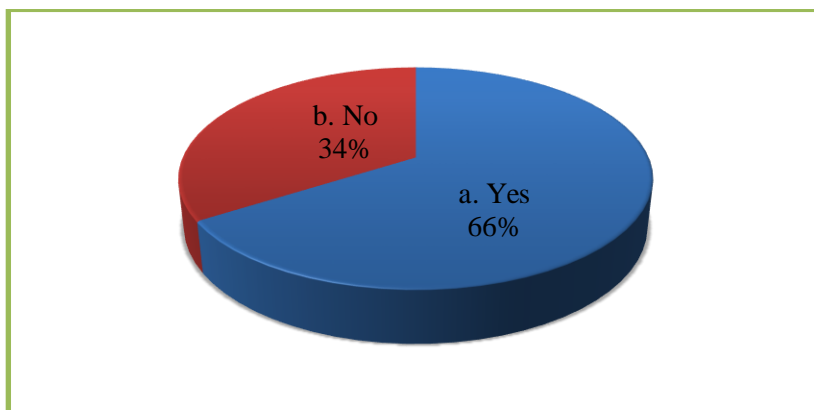
**Figure 3.8:** The importance of practicing grammar

Table 3.8 and figure 3.8 show that 17 students represent 53% strongly agree on the importance of practicing grammar. It is also found that 10 students who represent 31% of the participants agree, also 5 students who represent 16% are neutral on the importance of grammar, and no one disagrees or strongly disagree with the statement. This agreement shows that most students believe that practicing grammar is important in classes. While no one disagrees because students are needed for practicing grammar to improve their grammar competence.

**Item 9.** Do you try to improve your grammatical competence on your own?

Option	Participants	Percentage
a. Yes	21	66%
b. No	11	34%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.9:** Students' attempt to improve their grammatical competence



**Figure 3.9:** Students' attempt to improve their grammatical competence

Results obtained from table 3.9 and figure 3.9 show 21 students, which represent 66%, that they have the ability to try to improve their grammatical competence, because grammar is important in classes and needful for everyone, while 11 students, which

represent 34%, that they don't any desire to improve their grammatical competence, because they think that grammar is not important and needless for them.

### **Ways students use to improve their grammatical competence**

- By watching educational videos
- Grammar is an important part of using the English language
- By doing some exercises at home
- Practice at home
- Watching videos to know more about difficult things.
- Practice, self-test
- Read more articles
- Through apps
- I study grammar by myself I don't rely on teachers
- I love doing the exercises they are a source of entertainment for me
- Making sure I don't make mistakes in writing
- More practice at home, or whenever there is a chance.
- Online quizzes always, and some written exercises of previous exams
- Researching and reading grammatical books
- There are some quizzes on the internet where you check your answers and they correct your mistakes. Textbooks are helpful when you try to study on your own, but sometimes when I am confused so I ask my teacher.
- Read articles
- Youtube videos, and signing in websites of learning grammar and more
- Reading more
- By marking any new structure, I encounter while reading

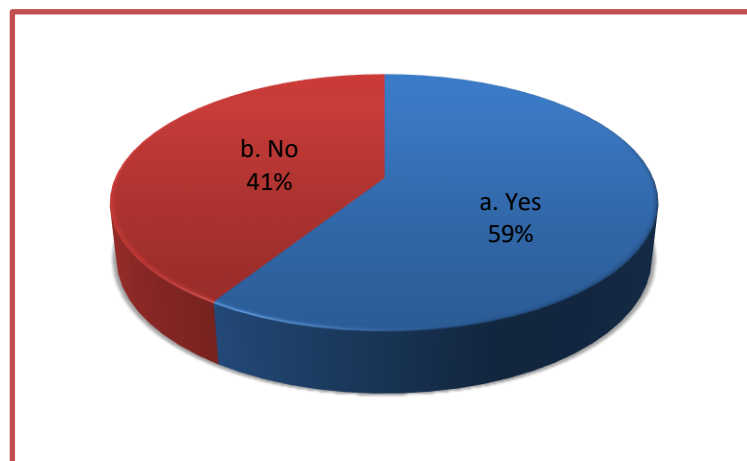


- Taking online quizzes and reading
- Practicing
- Plenty of application in smartphones and educational books

**Item10.** Does your grammar teacher usually provide you with extra activities to practice grammar at home?

Option	Participants	Percentage
a. Yes	19	59%
b. No	13	41%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.10:** Extra activities to practice grammar at home



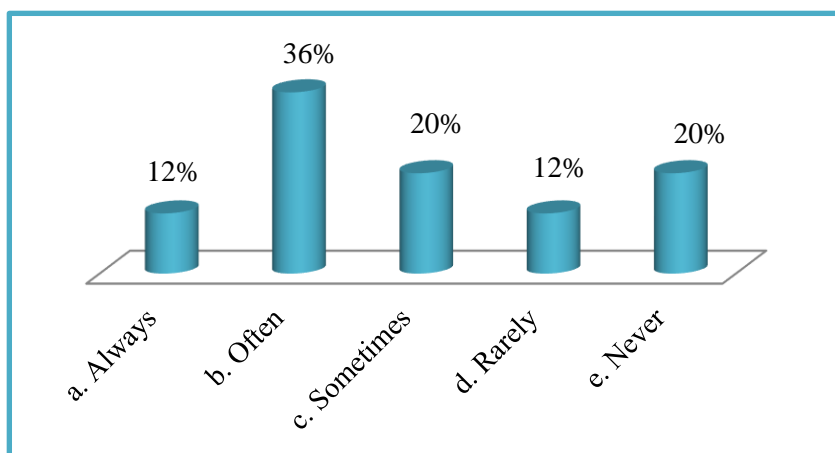
**Figure 3.10:** Extra activities to practice grammar at home

Table 3.10 and figure 3.10 express the extra activities to practice grammar at home, 19 students represent 59%, who answer by “Yes”. However, 13 students represent 41%, who answer by “No”. It is noticed that the most students are doing their extra activities in grammar which are provided by their teachers, however, some of them are not doing their extra activities because they think that grammar is needless.

**Item 10.1.** If yes, how often?

Option	Participants	Percentage
a. Always	3	12%
b. Often	9	36%
c. Sometimes	5	20%
d. Rarely	3	12%
e. Never	5	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.10.1:** Frequency of teachers' grammar extra activities



**Figure 3.10.1:** Frequency of teachers' grammar extra activities

This question aims to find out the frequency of teachers' grammar extra activities. The majority of responses, 9 of them representing 36% claim that their teachers of grammar often give the extra activities. While 5 of the participants representing 20% state that their teachers of grammar sometimes give the extra activities, and 3 students represent 12% assert that their teachers of grammar always give the extra activities.

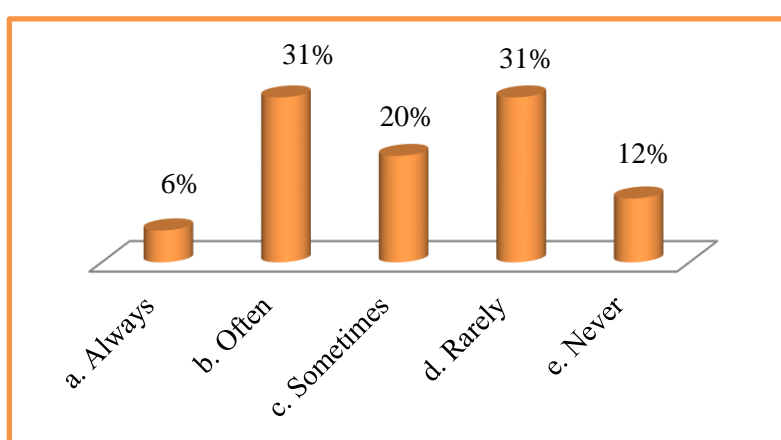
### Section Three: The Role of Homework

**Item 11.** How often do you get homework from your teacher?

Option	Participants	Percentage
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<b>a.</b> Always	2	6%
<b>b.</b> Often	10	31%
<b>c.</b> Sometimes	6	20%
<b>d.</b> Rarely	10	31%
<b>e.</b> Never	4	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.11:** Frequency of receiving homework from the teacher



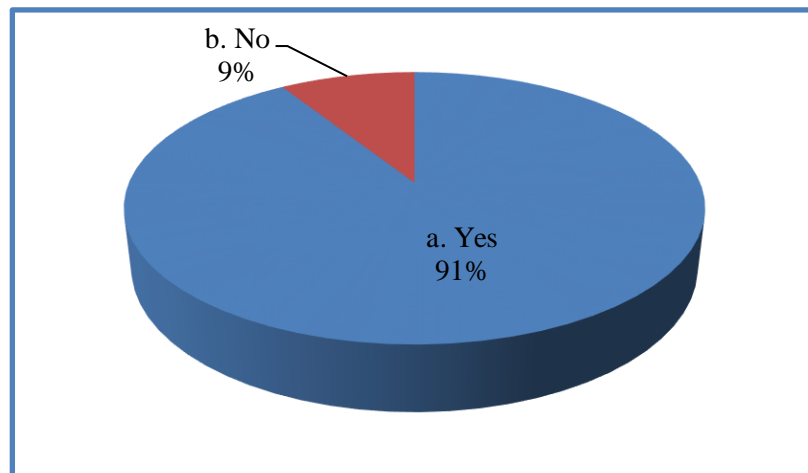
**Figure 3.11:** Frequency of receiving homework from the teacher

According to table 3.11 and figure 3.11 which about the frequency of receiving homework from the teacher. The majority of answers, 10 of them representing 31% claim that the students rarely when they receive the homework from their teachers. While 6 of the participants representing 20% state that sometimes when the students receive their homework from their teachers. Four students representing 12% choose “Never” as a response to this question, and 2 students representing 4% assert that students always receive the homework. It is found that students often when they receive the homework from their teachers, and this could be the result of teachers’ strategies or student’s motivation.

**Item 12.** Do you think students should receive homework frequently?

Option	Participants	Percentage
a. Yes	29	91%
b. No	3	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.12:** Students' attitude towards receiving homework frequently



**Figure 3.12:** Students' attitude towards receiving homework frequently

When they asked about the receiving of homework frequently, students gave different answers. Findings show that 29 students (91%) most of the students receive homework frequently. In contrast, 3 students representing 9% few of students who answer by “No” they don't receive homework frequently. This question aims at investigating the students' views about receiving homework infrequent way.

### Students' justifications

#### a) For “Yes”

- It helps us to improve our level
- I may compare grammar to a sword the more you sharpen your skills in grammar the better you can produce.
- Because grammar is based on practice.

- To make more knowledge
- Homework is necessary for the student to memorize the rule and information that they study
- Because practice is the key to master something whatever it was.
- Grammar is about practice. There are always some exceptions that you won't get unless you practice.
- I practice developing
- It is efficient, especially for those who don't practice by themselves
- It gives the learners much time to practice and better understand the courses
- Because it would enhance the students' grammar
- The more homework the more you develop your competence in grammar
- If the teacher gives homework frequently, students are able to practice more and benefit to revise at home
- To improve their grammar and to understand more
- To improve grammar that is really needed to improve language skills.
- Due to revise their lessons and practice the rules.
- To practice more and get feedback on their achievements
- The practice is better. Because grammar rules are difficult to be memorized
- To practice, learning is based on practice
- Because it will help to understand more
- Frequent homework helps the student remember better for example when he makes mistakes, he learns from them...
- To practice more in order to master grammar
- To practice more and learn rules by heart

- Homework helps to better understand the course and push learners to search and learn new things
- To practice more
- To acquire their grammar well
- Because they learn more with practice.
- To practice their writing

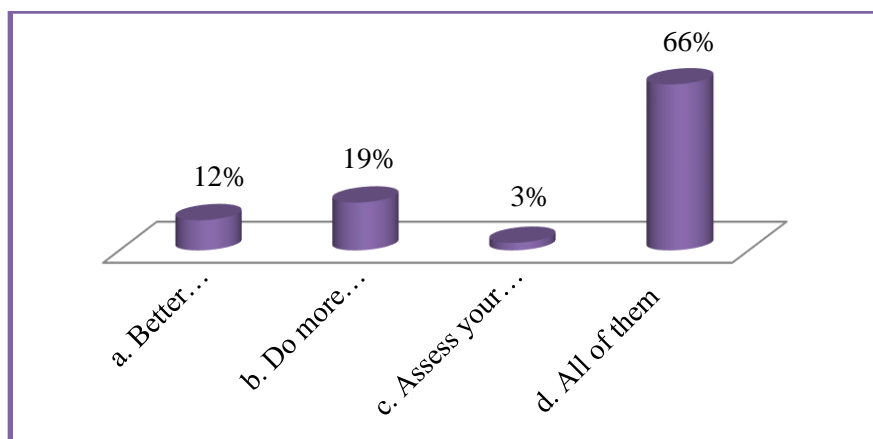
**b) For “No”**

- It should be a personal effort not something to be obliged to do
- It's important to teach them autonomy, provide them with websites since they are online all the time
- Because most of the time they will do them at last min before class starts so do most of the work in the classroom

**Item 13.** Do you think that using homework is necessary to

<b>Option</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>a.</b> Better understand the course	4	12%
<b>b.</b> Do more practice	6	19%
<b>c.</b> Assess your understanding	1	3%
<b>d.</b> All of them	21	66%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.13:** The necessity of using homework



**Figure 3.13:** The necessity of using homework

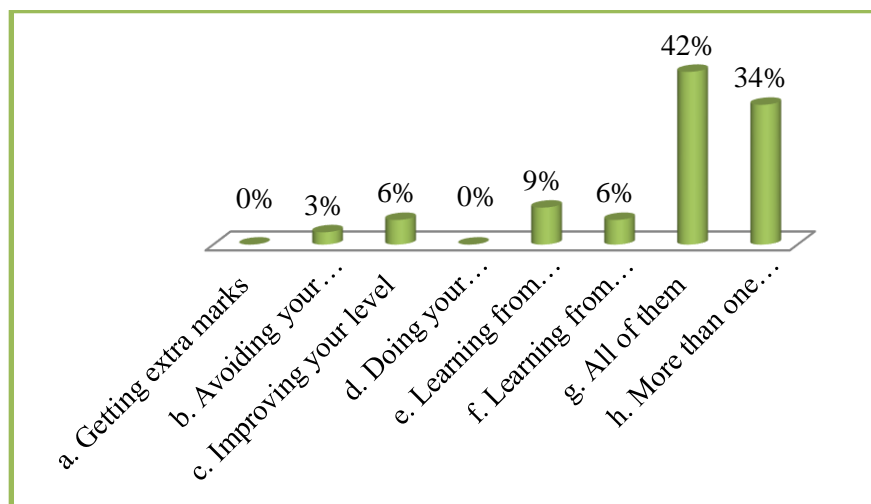
The necessity of using homework obtained from responses of question 13 in table 3.13 and figure 3.13 show that 4 students believe that they do the homework In order to get a better understanding of the course. While 6 students assume that they do the homework for doing more practices, and one student claims that do the homework in order to assess the understanding. However, 21 students believe that they do the homework, for the reason of all mentioned above. These findings show that students' views about the necessity of homework.

**Item 14.** What motivates you most to do your homework? You may choose more than one option.

Option	Participants	Percentage
a. Getting extra marks	0	0%
b. Avoiding your teacher's punishment	1	3%
c. Improving your level	2	6%
d. Doing your assignments by yourself	0	0%
e. Learning from your mistakes	3	9%
f. Learning from your teacher's feedback	2	6%
g. All of them	13	42%

<b>h. More than one answer</b>	11	34%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.14:** Students' source(s) of motivation(s) to do their homework



**Figure 3.14:** Students' source(s) of motivation(s) to do their homework

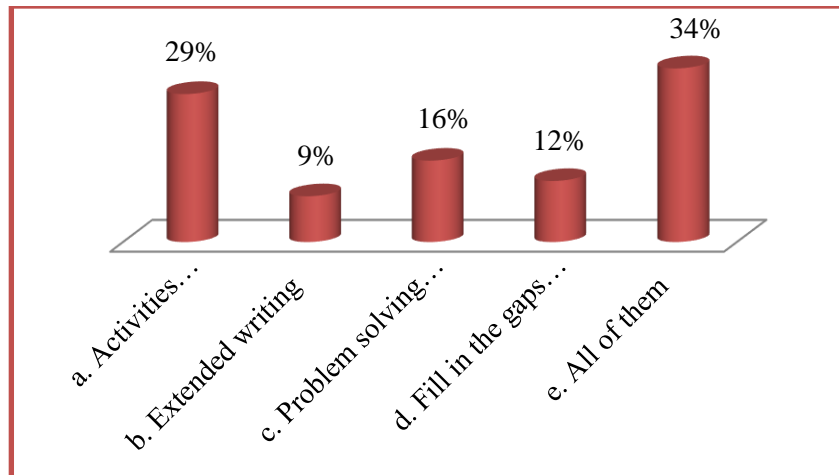
According to table 3.14 and figure 3.14 which express the students' source of motivation to do their homework. 42% choose all the choices that mentioned while 34% choose more than one answer. 9% select learning from their mistakes, whereas 6% choose to learn from their teachers' feedback, and

**Item 5.** What type(s) of homework do you receive in grammar module?

<b>Option</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>a.</b> Activities worksheets	9	29%
<b>b.</b> Extended writing	3	9%
<b>c.</b> Problem solving activities	5	16%
<b>d.</b> Fill in the gaps activities	4	12%
<b>e.</b> All of them	11	34%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Table 3.15:** Type(s) of homework in the grammar module



**Figure 3.15:** Type(s) of homework in the grammar module

From table 3.15 and figure 3.15, students receive many types of homework in the grammar module. Nine participants representing 29%, they receive the activities worksheets, while 3 students representing 9%, they receive the extended writing. 5 students representing 16%, they receive problem-solving activities, and 4 students representing 12%, they receive the type of filling in the gaps activities; In addition, the most students (34%) receive all the types of homework. These findings present that most students receive all the kinds of homework in the grammar module from their teachers.

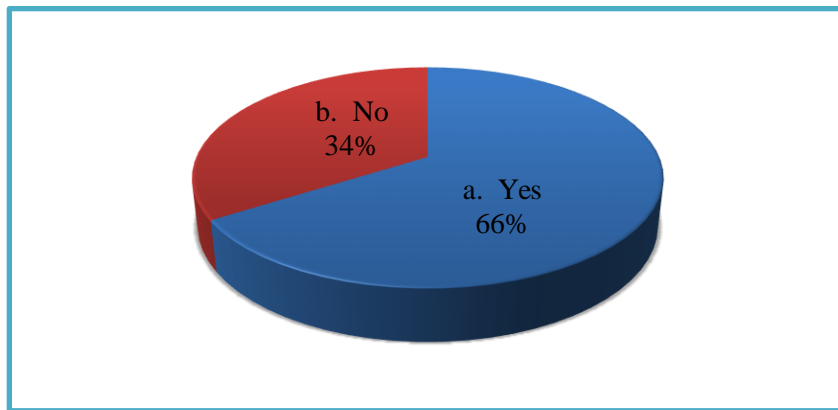
### Others

- To know most of the grammar rules and exceptions
- Researching

**Item 16.** Do you receive corrective feedback on your grammar homework?

Option	Participants	Percentage
a. Yes	21	66%
b. No	11	34%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.16:** Receiving corrective feedback on grammar homework



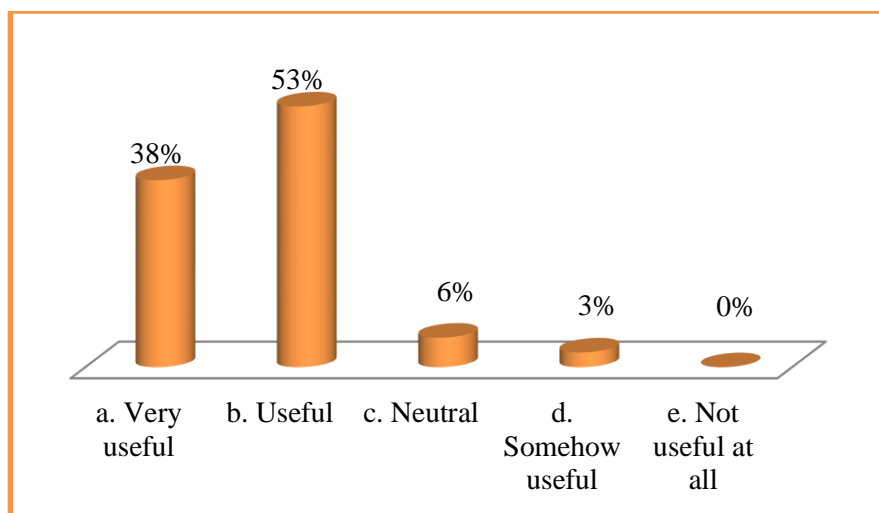
**Figure 3.16:** Receiving corrective feedback on grammar homework

The above table and figure show clearly that 21 students represent 66%, they agree that can receive their corrective feedback on grammar homework. However, 11 students represent 34%, they disagree that cannot receive their feedback on grammar homework. It is noticed that most students agree that they receive their corrective feedback on grammar homework while some of them disagree that they cannot receive their corrective feedback on grammar homework.

**Item 17.** How do you find the use of homework?

Option	Participants	Percentage
a. Very useful	12	38%
b. Useful	17	53%
c. Neutral	2	6%
d. Somehow useful	1	3%
e. Not useful at all	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.17:** Students' attitude towards the use of homework



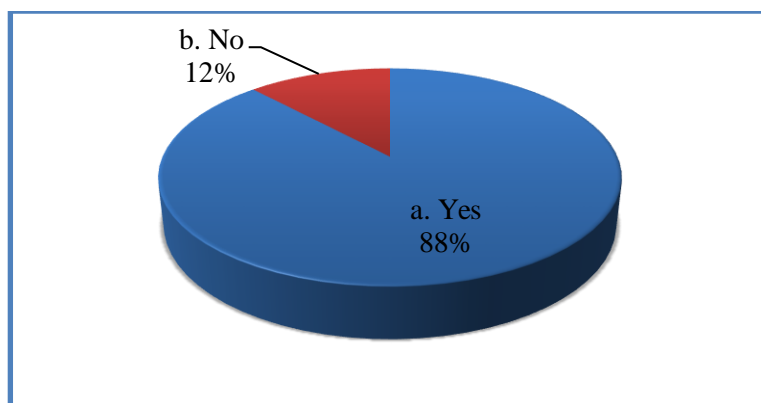
**Figure 3.17:** Students' attitude towards the use of homework

According to table 3.17 and figure 3.17, 17 students represent 53% notices that the most students are thought that homework is useful, while 12 students represent 38%, they think that homework is very useful, and 3 students represent 6%, they saw that homework is neutral, one student represents 3% claims that homework is somehow useful. None of the students think that homework is not useful at all. The aim of this question is to illustrate the students' view on homework.

**Item 18.** Do you realize any improvement in your grammatical competence because of the homework?

Option	Participants	Percentage
a. Yes	28	88%
b. No	4	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.18:** Students' improvement in grammatical competence



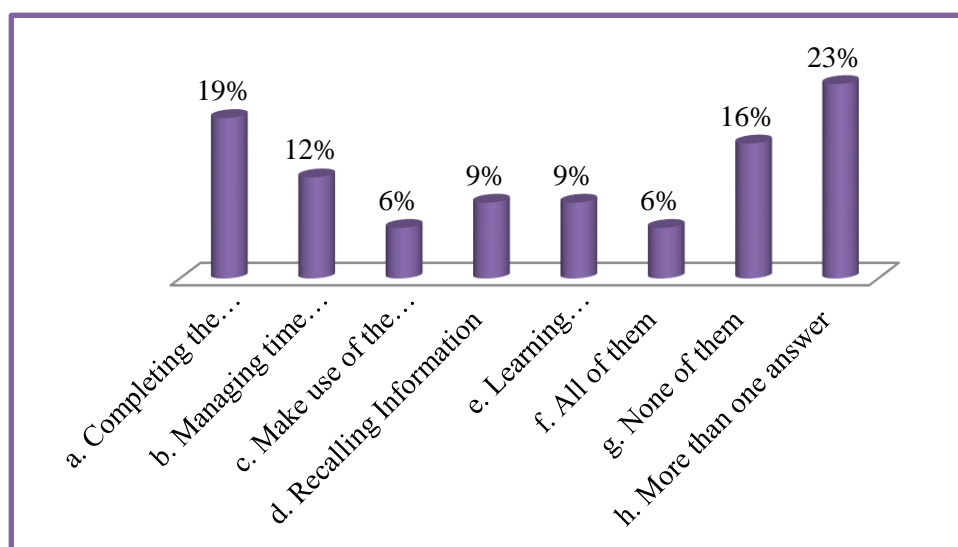
**Figure 3.18:** Students' improvement in grammatical competence

According to table 3.18 and figure 3.18. 28 participants represent 88%, most of the students agree that homework can improve their grammatical competence. However, 4 students represent 12%, they disagree that homework cannot improve grammatical competence. The aim of this question is to show the value of homework in improving students' grammatical competence.

**Item 19.** What are the difficulties that you encounter when doing your grammar homework? (You may check more than one)

Option	Participants	Percentage
<b>a.</b> Completing the homework correctly	6	19%
<b>b.</b> Managing time devoted to the homework	4	12%
<b>c.</b> Make use of the homework efficiently	2	6%
<b>d.</b> Recalling Information	3	9%
<b>e.</b> Learning independently	3	9%
<b>f.</b> All of them	2	6%
<b>g.</b> None of them	5	16%
<b>h.</b> More than one answer	7	23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.19:** Difficulties students encounter when doing homework



**Figure 3.19:** Difficulties students encounter when doing homework

Table 3.19 and figure 3.19, show the difficulties of students encounter when doing homework. A percentage of 19% of participants completing the homework, 12% of students managing time devoted for the homework, and 6% of them make use of the homework efficiently. Also, 9% of participants recalling information, 9% of students learning independently. Also, 6% of participants, they face all of the difficulties mentioned above; whereas 16% of students, they don't face any of these difficulties. And 23% of students are choosing more than one difficulty because they face many difficulties. The aim of this question is to demonstrate difficulties that can face students when they do homework.

### **Discussion of the Main Results**

The results supported that homework is important for students learning in grammar lessons. However, most of the second-year students of English at Biskra University are they have many difficulties in some grammatical aspects since they are not interested in grammar lessons. It is found that they have different difficulties in grammar lessons, the

use of tenses, the use of different types of phrases and sentences, sentence structure, the use of adverbs instead of adjectives, and the use of plural markers, also there are other students which their difficulties concerning identifying different elements.

Another findings which concern the importance of practicing grammar, most of the students agree to practice grammar, because grammar is basic of the language, also when students practice more they get a better understanding the course.

It is also found that most students are trying to improve their grammar competence, while the other they do not attempt to improve their grammar competence. The most students who try to improve their grammar, they depend on many ways which are By watching educational videos, More practice at home, or whenever there is a chance, Online quizzes always, and some written exercises of previous exams, Researching and reading grammatical books, Online quizzes always, and some written exercises of previous exams and Grammar is the important part of using the English language. Another important finding is about students' attitude towards receiving homework, most of the students are receiving homework frequently because their teachers try to build their abilities and develop their grammar competence, also many teachers think that grammar is based on practice, and practice is the key to master something whatever it was. Grammar is about practice. There are always some exceptions that you won't get unless you practice.

A major finding in the analysis of the questionnaire for students is that using homework is necessary for students because it assesses the students' understanding, does more practice, and get a better understanding of the course. Also, it is found that students have many sources of motivation to do their homework, the most of students their sources of motivation are getting extra marks, Avoiding the teacher's punishment, Improving the level, learning from their mistakes and Learning from their teachers' feedback.

## **Conclusion**

In sum, the findings presented in this chapter can be summarised in three principle points, the first point is that students have many difficulties in grammar lessons which they must improve them by practicing more. The second point is that students are trying to improve their grammar competence which they depend on in many ways. The third point is that homework is important for learners because when they practice more they get a better understanding. This chapter presents the findings of students' questionnaire; it can be concluded that students must improve their grammar competence in order to get a better understanding of the courses, by using homework as a formative assessment. Moreover, homework is necessary for both students and teachers, because it is a helpful way to assess students' levels. Finally, results in this chapter also support students' sources of motivation to do their homework. Finally, the conclusions in this study have provided an important finding which is students must improve their grammar competence by using homework as a formative assessment.

## **Limitations of the Study**

# **General Conclusion**



## **General conclusion**

A literature review has evinced that students must improve their grammar competence by using homework as a formative assessment. Students encounter many difficulties in grammar lessons, which they must improve them that depending on multiple practices. In order to get a better understanding of grammar lessons, students must practice more. Hence, homework is an important tool for both students and teachers, students help them to improve their levels, while teachers help them to assess the students' levels.

The main aim of this work is to highlight the importance of homework on students learning achievement in grammar. This study, therefore, investigates students' difficulties in grammar that they must improve them by using homework. Moreover, this study attempts to investigate the necessity of homework in grammar courses, because it plays an important tool for both students and teachers. It also attempts to demonstrate the students' source of motivation when they do homework. Because students themselves need the side of motivation to complete their homework.

This present study is divided into three chapters. The theoretical part of this research includes two chapters, which are devoted to literature review concerning the nature of grammar and homework. While the practical part of this study contains chapter three that used questionnaire research tools instrument to investigate the students' difficulties in grammar, homework is a helpful way to improve these difficulties.

Results showed that students face many difficulties in grammar lessons, the reason for these difficulties is the lack of practice. Homework is a way of formative assessment for students to be competent to improve their grammar competence. Moreover, findings have provided that students are trying to improve their grammatical competence, because

grammar is a basic thing in language for students to learn, and that they focus on more practice to get a better understanding of grammar courses. It also proved that students have many sources of motivation when they do homework such as learning the mistakes, getting extra marks, improving the level, learning from teachers' feedback.

## **Recommendations**

From the findings of the present study, several suggestions can be useful for future studies to investigate the importance of homework on students learning achievement in grammar ;

- It is important to train EFL learners to develop their grammatical competence by using more practice.
- Homework should be given to students in a frequent way because it helps the students to get a better understanding.
- Teachers should use tools as homework or assignments to reduce grammar difficulties of students.
- Students should practice more in grammar in order to improve their grammar capacities.
- The choice of any type of homework in grammar helps the students to get better motivation in the classroom.
- It is noteworthy that without homework, the student might not get more understanding in grammar module, therefore, are asked to develop their grammatical competence.
- Often grammar homework could be corrective feedback for students.

- Students should attempt to improve their grammatical competence because it is considered as basic in the English language.
- Since students have different difficulties, it is recommended to investigate the difficulties that face them when they do grammar homework and they should treat these difficulties by practice more.

## References

# **Appendices**

**Appendix 1: Students' Questionnaire**

**PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA  
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH  
MOHAMED KHEIDER UNIVERSITY – BISKRA  
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES  
SECTION OF ENGLISH**

Dear students

You are kindly requested to answer this questionnaire, which is designed for the sake of gathering useful information to accomplish a master's dissertation. Through this questionnaire, we attempt to address the role of homework in improving students' grammatical competence. Your collaboration will be a great help for us to gather the needed information for the study. Please, tick (✓) in the appropriate box(es) and give full answer(s) whenever it is necessary.

Thank you for your time and contribution

**Prepared by**

MANSRI Amina

**Supervised by**

Mr. LEBIAR Khaled

**2019-2020**

## **Section One: General Information**

**Q1.** Please, specify your gender

- a) Male                       b) Female

**Q2.** How do you consider your level in English?

- a) Very good   
b) Good   
c) Average   
d) Poor   
e) Very poor

**Q2.** Why did you choose to study English? (you may check more than one)

- a) To fulfill an educational degree   
b) To improve your employment prospects in the future   
c) To communicate with foreigners   
d) To continue your study abroad

## **Section Two: Grammatical Competence**

**Q1.**How do you evaluate your grammatical competence?

- a) Very good   
b) Good   
c) Average   
d) Poor   
e) Very poor

**Q2.** Do you enjoy grammar lessons?

- a) Yes   
b) No

**Q3.** Do you think that the time devoted for teaching grammar is sufficient?

- a) Yes                       b) No

**Q4. Q10.** Which of the following aspects you think you have problems acquiring and would like to work more on them? (you may check more than one)

- a) The use of tenses
- b) Sentence structure
- c) The use of different types of phrases and sentences
- d) The use of articles and prepositions
- e) The use of plural markers
- f) The use of adverbs instead of adjectives
- g) All of them
- h) None of

Others

.....

.....

.....

**Q5.** It is important for me to practice my grammar?

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

**Q6.** Do you try to improve your grammatical competence on your own?

- a) Yes
- b) No

if yes, how:

.....

.....

.....



**Q7.** Does your grammar teacher usually provide you with extra activities to practice grammar at home?

a) Yes

b) No

If yes, how often?

a) Always

b) Often

c) Sometimes

d) Rarely

e) Never

**Section Three: The Role of Homework**

**Q1.** How often do you get homework from your teacher?

a) Always

b) Often

c) Sometimes

d) Rarely

e) Never

**Q2.** Do you think students should receive homework frequently?

a) Yes

b) No

In both cases, explain why:

.....  
.....

**Q3.** Do you think that using homework is necessary to

a) Better understand the course

b) Do more practice

c) Assess your understanding

d) All of them

**Q4.** What motivates you mostly to do your homework? You may choose more than one option.

- a) Getting extra marks
- b) Avoiding your teacher's punishment
- c) Improving your level
- d) Doing your assignments by yourself
- e) Learning from your mistakes
- f) Learning from your teacher's feedback
- g) g) All of them

**Q5.** What type of homework do you receive regarding grammar module?

- a) Activities worksheets
- b) Extended writing
- c) Problem solving activities

Others, please specify

.....  
.....

**Q6.** Do you receive a corrective feedback on your grammar homework?

- a) Yes
- b) No

**Q7.** How do you find the use of homework?

- a) Very useful
- b) b) Useful
- c) Neutral
- d) Somehow useful
- e) c) Not useful at all

**Q8.** Do you realize any improvement in your grammatical competence because of the homework?

- a) Yes
- b) No

**Q9.** What are the difficulties you encounter when doing your grammar homework? (you may check more than one)

- a) Completing the homework correctly
- b) Managing time devoted for the homework
- c) Make use of the homework efficiently
- d) Recalling Information
- e) Learning independently
- f) All of them
- g) None of them

**Thank you for your time and cooperation**

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## الملخص

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى وصف أهمية الواجب المنزلي في تحصيل الطلاب لتعلم القواعد حيث أنها تسمح للطلاب بتحسين كفاءتهم النحوية باستخدام الواجبات المنزلية كتقييم تكويني ، كما توضح الصعوبات التي يواجهها الطلاب في القواعد وكيفية معالجة هذه المشكلة باستخدام المزيد. الممارسات. يساهم في إعطاء الطلاب قيمة أكبر للواجب المنزلي لاستنباط آرائهم LMD لكل من الطلاب والمعلمين. تستند الدراسة إلى استبيان واحد موجه إلى طلاب السنة الثانية حول أهمية الواجبات المنزلية على الطلاب في القواعد. الهدف من الاستبيان هو الحصول على معلومات حول الأهمية التي يوليها المتعلمون للواجب المنزلي. أما بالنسبة لعينة الدراسة فقد تم اختيار 32 طالبًا بشكل عشوائي من مجموع 300 طالب في السنة الثانية ماجستير في اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة بسكرة خلال العام الدراسي 2020/2019 ، وتم استخدام استبيان كأداة بحثية لجمع البيانات. فيما يتعلق بآراء الطلاب حول هذا الموضوع. سلط تحليل البيانات ومناقشتها الضوء على عدد من النتائج ، وكشف تحليل الاستبيان أنه يجب على الطلاب اعتبار الواجب المنزلي جانبًا مهمًا لتحسين كفاءتهم النحوية وأنه يجب عليهم محاولة ممارسة المزيد من أجل الحصول على القواعد النحوية بشكل صحيح لأنه عندما يمارسون أكثر ، يمكن أن يكونوا أكفاء في القواعد





تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى وصف أهمية الواجب المنزلي في تحصيل الطلاب لتعلم القواعد حيث أنها تسمح للطلاب بتحسين كفاءتهم النحوية باستخدام الواجبات المنزلية كتقييم تكويني ، كما توضح الصعوبات التي يواجهها الطلاب في القواعد وكيفية معالجة هذه المشكلة باستخدام المزيد. الممارسات. يساهم في إعطاء الطلاب قيمة أكبر للواجب المنزلي لكل من الطلاب والمعلمين. تستند الدراسة إلى استبيان واحد موجه إلى طلاب السنة الثانية LMD لاستنباط آرائهم حول أهمية الواجبات المنزلية على الطلاب في القواعد. الهدف من الاستبيان هو الحصول على معلومات حول الأهمية التي يوليها المتعلمون للواجب المنزلي. أما بالنسبة لعينة الدراسة فقد تم اختيار 32 طالبًا بشكل عشوائي من مجموع 300 طالب في السنة الثانية ماجستير في اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة بسكرة خلال العام الدراسي 2020/2019 ، وتم استخدام استبيان كأداة بحثية لجمع البيانات. فيما يتعلق بآراء الطلاب حول هذا الموضوع. سلط تحليل البيانات ومناقشتها الضوء على عدد من النتائج ، وكشف تحليل الاستبيان أنه يجب على الطلاب اعتبار الواجب المنزلي جانبًا

مهمًا لتحسين كفاءتهم النحوية وأنه يجب عليهم محاولة ممارسة المزيد من أجل الحصول على القواعد النحوية بشكل صحيح لأنه عندما يمارسون أكثر ، يمكن أن يكونوا أكفاء في القواعد.