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THE ROLE OF CARTOONS IN TEACHING GRAMMAR IN EFL CLASSES¹

Abstract

This study was conducted in order to investigate the effects of lesson activities including cartoons in teaching of grammar on 8th grade students' learning English grammar. For this study, twenty nine students in two groups of 8th grade classes in a secondary school in Samsun were chosen. In the study, a pretest-posttest model with control and experiment groups has been used. To define the current knowledge of the students in both groups, a pre-test was applied to both groups. After the teaching period, a post-test was applied to both group and in order to analyse the findings, IBM SPSS Statistics 22 software programme was used. During the 10 week teaching process, ten different grammar subjects were taught the students in the group chosen as the experiment group through the cartoons prepared for the presentation or/and practice sections of the lesson. The results of the post-test, which was administered at the end of the instruction period, have revealed that using cartoons in grammar teaching had a positive effect on the achievement of the students in the experiment group.

¹ This article has been developed from the M.A. thesis of the second author.

Keywords: Grammar, Caricatures, Secondary School Students, Foreign Language Teaching

YABANCI DİL SINIFLARINDA DİLBİLGİSİ ÖĞRETİMİNDE KARİKATÜRLERİN ROLÜ

Öz

Bu çalışma, İngilizce dilbilgisi öğretiminde karikatürlerin rol aldığı ders etkinliklerinin Samsun'da bir ortaokuldaki 8. sınıf öğrencilerinin İngilizce dilbilgisi öğrenmelerine ilişkin etkisini araştırmak amacıyla yapılmıştır. Bu araştırma için 8. sınıfların iki grubunda olan toplam 29 öğrenci seçilmiştir. Araştırmaya katılan öğrencilerin belirlenen gramer konularıyla ilgili bilgilerini ölçmek amacıyla her iki gruba da ön test uygulanmıştır. Çalışmada deney ve kontrol gruplu öntest-sontest modeli kullanılmıştır. Öğretim süreci sonrasında her iki gruba son test uygulanmış ve bu testlerin analizinde IBM SPSS İstatistik 22 paket programı kullanılmıştır. 10 hafta süren öğretim etkinliği boyunca, on farklı gramer konusu dersin gerek sunum gerekse alıştırma aşamalarında kullanılan karikatürlerin olduğu ders etkinlikleri 8A sınıfına uygulanmıştır. Öğretim süreci sonunda uygulanan son test sonuçları, İngilizce derslerinde dilbilgisi öğretiminde karikatürlerin kullanımının, deney grubundaki öğrencilerin başarısında etkili olduğunu göstermiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Dilbilgisi, karikatür, Ortaokul öğrencileri, Yabancı Dil Öğretimi.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

It is common knowledge that foreign language learning is gaining importance day by day, and most people tend to learn a foreign language especially English, for some reasons such as finding a good job, communicating with the native speakers of the target language, having a better position or promoting in a job. Whatever the reason is, it is not hard to see that foreign language learning has been an indispensable need of our age.

For decades there has been an ever-grown interest on the studies in the field of foreign language teaching. As most language teachers, English language teachers in Turkey either teach English in the light of existing language teaching methods and according to the curriculum defined by the Ministry of National Education or tend to follow new trends in teaching a foreign language to school students in terms of the curriculum prepared according to the Common European Framework for language learning. Turkish students who do not have opportunity to use the target language outside the classroom learn it through the class activities designed according to the coursebooks given by the Ministry of National Education. In these coursebooks, it is possible to see many grammatical structures which the students need to learn to use the language effectively.

There has always been a debate among language teachers and reserachers about the necessity of grammar teaching and what the most appropriate methods are. Traditionally, grammar, which was considered as the center of language, was taught deductively with repetitive drills and excercises, which causes learners to have only the declarative knowledge, but not not procedural knowledge. As advocates of communicative approach claim, grammar

teaching should not be in the center of language learning, and instead of memorizing the rules, the students should know how to use them communicatively in real contexts. In other words, while some think that it is not a necessary element for communication, some think that it is an indispensable part of language learning. According to Kohli (1984), cited in Debata (2013), not knowing the grammar of the language is like being a driver who knows nothing about the working of the engine while knowing the grammar is like being a driver who knows not only driving but also the working of the machinery. From this illustration, it is easily deduced that one can not think of learning a foreign language without its grammar. In his article about the importance of grammar in ELT, Debata (2013) states that grammar is an important source of reference when linguistic customs let down us, and a foreign language cannot be learnt correctly just with an unconscious learning. As he discusses, the process of unconscious assimilation of grammar knowledge is not sufficient to speak the target language correctly, clearly and effectively.

As mentioned before, people learn English for different purposes, not just for simple language use. Thus, while teaching English to our students, we can not ignore how they will use the language they learn in the future. Samely, we should not ignore teaching grammar at the same time.

Teaching grammar does not mean just making the students learn or memorize the rules in a deductive way. At first sight, trying to learn grammar rules can not be enjoyable for most students because of traditional methods used in teaching grammar. Instead of making the students learn grammar rules in traditional methods such as repetitive drills and exercises, it is better and more motivating to make them learn with the discovery of the rules by the help of teacher's guide. At schools in which time for teaching English as a foreign language is limited, it is necessary to teach grammar to the students in a more practical way. As mentioned above, in the light of communicative approach, it is essential to teach students how to use the rules they learn in a daily life context. Furthermore, as whatever the age is, learning grammar rules does not seem an enjoyable activity for most students. It is important for students to have fun while learning grammar. The students who are bored during the courses need to be motivated to learn new things. Clearly, if the teacher presents his/her lessons in a humorous way or exploits humorous materials which are appropriate for their age and interest, they are supposed to take pleasure and focus on the subject in the teaching process whatever the age is. In relation to this subject, Holmes and Marra (2002) also states that humour is helpful in terms of installing and supporting relationships which provide harmony to the setting by expressing collaboration. Also, according to Ginman and Ungern-Sternberg (2003), it is evident that the message is saved easily if humour is used with it. When humour is combined with the positive effect of visual aids, it becomes more effective. Cartoons, which are produced in this way, are effective materials to be made use of in grammar courses. They include both humour and visuality, and when they contain the use of certain grammar points properly for the real life situations, they can be readily used in grammar classes, and it is undeniable that this creates an enjoyable class atmosphere.

This present study aims to show the effects of cartoons which include not only humour and visuality, but also the use of particular grammar structures in a context on learning grammar of English as a foreign language.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Grammar is an important part of language learning and its requirement can not be ignored as it provides students with the use of correct, meaningful and suitable linguistic forms. The students need to learn grammar of the target language for effective language learning. However, grammar rules are generally accepted as boring to learn for most students whatever the age is. It is a fact that the teacher's presenting the grammar rules in a pure way does not attract school students' attention. When teaching activities are presented in this way, grammar learning turns into a bogey for the students.

If the students need to learn some grammar, then, it is important and essential to create an enjoyable class atmosphere during the teaching and learning processes. It is also certain that grammar learning should not be a boring and even frightening phenomenon for students.

What is also aimed in this study is to see whether this problem could be overcome in this way, that is to say, to prevent the negative thoughts and emotions which arise during grammar teaching, by using the humorous effect of cartoons, which is considered to provide an effective and permanent learning.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

As indicated before, for most students, learning grammar of English is a tedious work, and because of this they hardly participate in the learning activities. In order to make students participate in the class activities by drawing their attention and to increase their attendance in grammar courses, it is important to create an enjoyable lesson and to expose them to learning materials they will like.

Based on the problem in question, the study aims at enabling students learn grammar points, making the lesson more enjoyable for them. More specifically, the purpose is to make use of the important properties of cartoons such as including humour, visuality and presenting structure in a context so as to raise their interest and get rid of their negative emotions towards grammar learning.

1.4. Significance of the Study

For most foreign language learners, learning grammar is not an enjoyable activity as they think it means only being exposed to rules and memorizing them. As all agree, Gardner also (2008) argues that English language teachers should try to teach grammar in a more communicative way in order to teach grammar in a meaningful context instead of using traditional methods including teaching formal rules. It is important for the students to know how to use what they learn. As well as including humour, the cartoons present a real life context. Thus, what is expected in this study is to provide an effective grammar learning by using cartoons.

1.5. Research Questions

This study addresses the following general research question:

Is there a significant effect of using caricatures in grammar teaching in EFL classes on the students' achievement?

Sub-Questions

1. Is there a significant difference between the pre test scores of the experimental and control group students?
2. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group students?
3. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the control group students?
4. Is there a significant difference between the post-test scores of the experimental and control group students?

1.6. Hypotheses

In this study, the following hypotheses are formulated in relation to the research questions already mentioned above:

1. There is significant effect of using cartoons on grammar learning in EFL classes.
2. There is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group.
3. There is significant difference between the post-tests scores of the experimental and control group students.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to teaching English grammar to secondary school students. More specifically, it is limited to 8th grade students in a secondary school in Samsun, Turkey. As indicated as the purpose of the study, it is also restricted to using cartoons to teach grammar during the teaching process.

2. Theoretical background

2.1 Grammar Teaching

There have been debates about the necessity of grammar competence in teaching a foreign language. However, it is realized that this debate has turned into how to teach grammar rather than whether to teach it or not. In other words; it has been agreed that that grammar is an important part of language learning and the students should have some knowledge about the grammatical structures of the target language in order to have a functional knowledge of that language, and consequently to use the language accurately.

When the point in question is grammar teaching, it is inevitable to touch on two major ways of presenting grammar, which have taken place in most of the discussions in the field of language teaching : Deductive and inductive approaches. As for the sake of the study, discussions about grammar teaching approaches have concentrated on these two approaches mostly.

Thornbury (1999) touches on the possible advantages and disadvantages of both deductive and inductive approaches. As indicated in his discussion about the disadvantages of deductive approaches, it is natural that young learners find lessons with a grammar presentation

boring and irritating as they always have difficulties in understanding the explanations, which usually consist of metalanguage. It is also agreed that learning a language should not refer to learning the rules of the language. At this point, it should also be noted that the students in language classes should be equipped with the procedural knowledge rather than declarative knowledge, as indicated in Nunan (2003). As the advantages of this approach, it is stated that learning some rules of the language in this way takes less time than discovering the rules, and this unquestionably allows more time for practice. Besides, deductive presentations are considered to meet most students' expectations, especially the expectations of those who have analytic learning style.

As for the advantages and disadvantages of lessons conducted by inductive style of teaching, in which learners are first exposed to a number of examples or exercises to help them master the target grammar point of the lesson; Thornburry (1999) discusses that when the learners themselves make an effort to work out the rule, which leads to learner autonomy, this will make the new material more memorable as this mental effort involves a greater degree of 'cognitive depth', which is, in some way, associated with the personal investment in processing knowledge and learning something. And it is obvious that in this way the learners will be more actively involved in the learning process, which is something desired in the teaching situations. Inductive teaching also help to develop learners' problem solving skills. The problem solving activities enable learners to get the opportunity for extra language practice when they are designed so as to be carried out cooperatively. Contrary to these benefits, inductive teaching activities may result in learners' belief that learning the rules seem to be the purpose of language learning. There is also such a danger that learners may fail to hypothesise the correct rule. It can also be remarked that the learners are usually frustrated by such implicit learning activities if they prefer lessons in which they are given explanations and told the rule since their learning style is analytic, as mentioned before.

Widodo (2006) also touches on the foregoing approaches, arguing that in deductive approach, which is also be called 'rule-driven learning', a grammar rule is explicitly presented to students and followed by practice applying the rule. It is also pointed out that an inductive approach which is also called 'rule-discovery approach' suggests that the teacher start teaching grammar with presenting some examples of sentences, and learners are anticipated to internalize grammatical rules from the examples. As pointed out before, this approach allows learners to take part actively in their own instruction and heartens them to develop their own mental strategies to deal with tasks. To put it another way, this approach maintains that grammatical rules should be taught in such an implicit way that learners are encouraged to internalize the rules presented through the examles.

Widodo (2006) also discusses the characteristics of specific inductive technique, 'consciousness raising' proposed by Ellis (2002), in which learners are urged to notice a particular grammar feature or principle, also as illustated in Nunan (2003). What is remarkable in this technique is that learners are not required to practice or use the certain sentence patterns taught.

Nunan (2003), apart from 'consciousness raising', also refers to another similar discovery technique such as input enhancement, in which learners are required to notice the use of the target grammar item underlined, highlighted or coloured in the material. The material could sometimes be a number of sentences or a reading text, which the learners are exposed to.

Hedge (2000) maintains that it is important to contextualize a grammatical structure, taking three perspectives into consideration: grammar as meaning, grammar in discourse and grammar and style. He also argues that the contexts through which grammar points are introduced need to be appropriate for the communicative needs and interests of the students, which Thornburry (1999: 26) also refers to this as A-Factor (Appropriacy) along with the E-Factor (Efficiency), as the main principles of teaching grammar, emphasizes that whichever techniques are used, grammar teaching should be as efficient and appropriate as possible. Hedge (2000) also maintains that in presenting grammar, the degree of explicitness is important, and illustrates to what extent explicit grammatical information should be provided to the learner with sample materials.

As a concluding remark, it can be pointed out that Nunan (2003) suggests that the teacher integrate both inductive and deductive methods into his/her teaching. However, one thing should be born in mind: Who the learners are is an important criterion in deciding whether implicit or explicit way of teaching should be preferred.

2.2. Humour and Language Teaching

It is known that as it strengthens the relations between people, humour has a strong function in social life and creates a positive atmosphere in most communicative situations. It would not be surprising that providing fun for students also helps to create a relaxing class atmosphere, which is something desirable in language teaching environments, as Krashen (1982) claims with his Affective Filter Hypothesis. In the light of this hypothesis, humour can be considered to be something that helps to lower the anxiety and stress level of the students. Abaudan's study (2009) has also revealed that humour plays a significant role to create a relaxed classroom atmosphere, and consequently to increase learners' motivation. Therefore, it is agreed that it would be beneficial for humorous materials to be embedded into the instructional materials used in language teaching contexts.

Deneire (1995) defines the positive effect of humor on the students' emotions as follows: "The high anxiety experienced by beginning foreign language learners may provoke frustration and aggressive reactions. The resulting tension can be released through humorous situations created by the teacher, the students, and/or the materials used" (p. 286).

Twerefou (2011) argues that in a "lightened" atmosphere, the students who are being afraid to talking in class will forget their problem. While laughing, they will not think about their worries and will be able to speak without any fears. In fact, humor is not only a source of motivation for students but also, a source of developing linguistic skills such as learning vocabulary and grammar, increasing critical thinking and practising semantics. He also points out that although the use of humour is suggested in language classes, the choice of humour should depend on the age, gender, religion, traditions, etc. of the learner. The language teacher should know what is allowed and what is not allowed both in foreign and native languages of the learners. Focusing on cultural humour in language teaching, he also states that if a foreign humour is different from the learner's, it can also serve as motivation. This is because of the idea that differences make the foreign languages more interesting and attractive, which are motivating factors.

Schmitz (2002) thinks that as well as making classes more enjoyable, humour also functions as a pedagogical tool in terms of developing students' proficiency. According to him,

the organization of humorous discourse is divided into three groups: (i) universal or reality-based humour which the students firstly deal with, (ii) culture-based humour which the students continue and (iii) linguistic or word-based humour which the students finally deal with.

Deneire (1995), in the integration of humour with methodology, emphasizes two important points; the kinds of humour used in foreign language teaching classroom and when and how humour should be used in the teaching sequence. He suggests that the necessary linguistic and cultural information should be given to the students before a joke is presented. Therefore, according to him, instead of using it as a technique to acquire new linguistic knowledge, it should be used as an illustration and reinforcement of acquired knowledge.

On the contrary to Deneire, Schmitz (2002) thinks that at the beginning of the language teaching, humorous discourse in the form of anecdotes, jokes, puns and quips should be introduced and continued throughout the course.

Er (2017), who discusses how to use humorous materials as the pedagogical tool in language teaching educational contexts, puts emphasis on some principles in using humour in the language classroom. One of the most important criteria to choose humorous materials to be used in the classroom should certainly be appropriate for the students' ages. It is also emphasized that Inserting humour into the lesson necessarily requires a meticulous plan of the lesson, and a lesson integrated with humour can only be considered to be effective only when the humorous discourse or material is related to the content of the lesson.

Olajoke's study (2013) focuses on the students' perception on the use of humour in EFL classes. The results of the study show that the use of humour both reduces tension in the students and helps retention of the new material in the lessons.

2.3. The Use of Cartoons in Language Teaching

The foregoing discussions about humour has made it clear that humor has a motivating and striking effect in every part of life, creating a positive atmosphere and so, it has a power on lowering anxiety. When viewed from this aspect, it seems necessary to use humorous materials in educational settings to provide an enjoyable and relaxed atmosphere and to make learning more permanent.

As an element of visual humor, cartoons are considered to function as a humorous technique in educational contexts. According to Özer (2007), there is no technique which makes learning as interesting as caricatures do. In the discussion, it is remarked that caricature is a good tool especially in social sciences, science, history, geography courses, and certainly foreign language instruction. He states that caricatures can be used to attract attention at the beginning of the course to create a pleasant classroom atmosphere and to attract students' attention to the point of the lesson.

Naylor and Keogh (2013), as the supporters of humorous lessons, also report that using caricatures provide high motivation in all age groups, improve their discussion skills, give them effective learning and evaluation skills.

Considering the discussions about the effectiveness of using humorous materials in education, it can easily be said that it is also beneficial to use them during the class in language classes. According to Deneire (1995), in foreign language learning, smiling and laughter have both intellectual and emotional components. It is well known that learning a foreign/second

language requires motivation and enthusiasm. Otherwise, it will be a threatening school subject for the students. Therefore, it is considered that as a source of motivation and entertainment, cartoons are important tools in the foreign or second language classes.

Güven and Bekdaş (2018) conducted a research to investigate the effect of using caricatures on vocabulary retention in foreign language teaching. The results of experimental study, which was carried out with the voluntary participation of a total of 50 students in the preparatory class of a high school, revealed that there was a significant difference between the retention test scores of the experimental and control groups. Additionally, the interviews carried out with the students of the experimental group showed that the students found using caricatures beneficial. As a result, it was determined that using caricatures in teaching vocabulary increased retention, and provided a permanent learning.

Even if it is not directly related to making use of cartoons to teach language points in the language teaching contexts, it is worth mentioning Afrilyasanti and Basthomi's study (2011), which was carried out to investigate how cartoons and comics provide EFL students to be 21st century learners. The results verify that cartoons and comics helped students to gain their 21st century skills. By having activities using cartoons and comics, students could enjoy their learning and freely exploring their creative and analytical thinking.

3. Method

3.1 Participants and the design of the study

This experimental study, which examines the likely effects of using cartoons in teaching grammar in EFL classes, was conducted in a secondary school in Samsun, Turkey.

In order to test the proposed hypotheses, two 8th grade classes were assigned as the control and experimental groups. The study groups of the research were selected randomly as they shared the same teaching conditions and determined as 29 students in class 8A and class 8B. Class 8B was chosen as control group, and class 8A as experimental group. There were 5 male and 9 female students in experimental group and 8 female and 7 male students in control group, whose ages are 14.

An achievement test with 25 items, which was prepared by the researcher was used for collecting data. Before it was administered, the supervisor of the thesis and another expert were consulted, and the test which had 32 items first was developed again, undergoing some changes, as a result of which the test was made ready for the pilot study. In order to measure the reliability of the achievement test, 127 students from three different schools in 8th grade were involved in the pilot study. It took 40 minutes for the participants to complete the achievement test. One month later, the same test was applied to the same students. At the end of the pilot study it was recognized that the achievement test needed some modification before being administered in the control and experimental groups.

In order to statistically prove the proposed hypotheses, the experimental and control groups were chosen randomly among the 8th grade students. The dependent variety of this study is students' levels and foreign language achievement and motivation. On the other hand, the independent variety is the use of cartoons in teaching grammar.

Before the test period began, a pre-achievement test was conducted to both control and experimental groups. Ten different grammar subjects were determined for the instruction

according to the curriculum. The students in the experimental group were taught grammar points inserting the cartoons collected usually from the internet and some books into the lesson activities while the students in the control group were presented the same grammar points through relatively more traditional techniques.

3.2. Materials and Instruments

In the study, ten grammar subjects were determined as the points of the lessons according to 8th grade English course curriculum of the Ministry of National Education. At the beginning of the experimental study, the students were given an achievement test including 25 multiple choice grammar items to determine their current knowledge about the points chosen. However, the test was firstly applied to 127 students in the 8th grade classes from different schools. One month later, the same test was applied to the same students again to determine the reliability.

The first test has a general internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha Reliability) of 0,825.

Table 1. The Reliability Statistics of First Test

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,825	,820	25

The second test has a general internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha Reliability) of 0,820

Table 2. Reliability Statistics of Second Test

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,820	,817	25

Table 3. Item Statistics of First Test

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Question1	,6457	,48020	127
Question 2	,4488	,49934	127
Question 3	,3858	,48872	127
Question 4	,5591	,49847	127
Question 5	,1969	,39919	127
Question 6	,2126	,41077	127

Question 7	,5118	,50184	127
Question 8	,3386	,47510	127
Question 9	,3150	,46634	127
Question 10	,5197	,50159	127
Question 11	,5039	,50196	127
Question 12	,3622	,48254	127
Question 13	,4173	,49507	127
Question 14	,4016	,49216	127
Question 15	,3780	,48680	127
Question 16	,4094	,49368	127
Question 17	,5354	,50072	127
Question 18	,4094	,49368	127
Question 19	,5276	,50122	127
Question 20	,3307	,47233	127
Question 21	,4331	,49746	127
Question 22	,5354	,50072	127
Question 23	,2756	,44858	127
Question 24	,5669	,49746	127
Question 25	,1811	,38663	127

Table 4 Item Statistics of Second Test

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Question 1	,6850	,46634	127
Question 2	,4961	,50196	127
Question 3	,4803	,50159	127
Question 4	,5039	,50196	127
Question 5	,2362	,42644	127
Question 6	,3780	,48680	127
Question 7	,6535	,47773	127
Question 8	,4646	,50072	127

Question 9	,4488	,49934	127
Question 10	,5039	,50196	127
Question 11	,3780	,48680	127
Question 12	,4094	,49368	127
Question 13	,3937	,49050	127
Question 14	,4567	,50009	127
Question 15	,4803	,50159	127
Question 16	,3937	,49050	127
Question 17	,4567	,50009	127
Question 18	,3937	,49050	127
Question 19	,4803	,50159	127
Question 20	,3937	,49050	127
Question 21	,3701	,48474	127
Question 22	,5984	,49216	127
Question 23	,3071	,46311	127
Question 24	,5512	,49934	127
Question 25	,2047	,40510	127

The first test result (0,825) and the second test results (0,820) showed that the test was reliable according to Cronbach's alpha reliability.

3.3. Procedure

In the expereriment period, which lasted ten weeks, each grammar point was taught both control and experimental groups, but in different ways. The grammar points determined to be taught are; comparative and superlative forms of adjectives, will, be going to (to express future), should, simple past tense, present perfect tense, present continuous tense, would rather, prefer + Ving. As mentioned before, the control group was taught these grammar points through traditional teaching methods without being exposed to materials with humorous elements. The same grammar points were taught the students in the experimental group through the cartoons at both the presentation and the practice sections of the lessons.

4. Data Analysis and Findings

In the present study, which aims that investigating the role cartoons on teaching grammar in EFL classes for the 8th grade students in a secondary school, the notion of achievement is used as the dependent variable, while the use of cartoons is the independent variable. The data was analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

22.0. All statistical tests conducted to address the questions of the study used “0.05” as the minimum alpha level of significance.

Data obtained throughout the study have been analyzed in terms of the research questions.

4.1. The Results for the Research Question 1

Research Question 1: Is there a significant difference between the pretest scores of the experimental and control group students?

At the beginning of the study, a pre-test was applied to both control and experimental group to see if there is significant difference between the students’ current knowledge about the target grammar points. Pre-test results are presented in Table 6 below:

Table 5. The results of the Mann Whitney U Test For Pretest Scores Of The Experimental And Control Group Students.

	Grup	n	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	z	p
PreTest	Control	15	13,03	195,50	75,500	-1,299	,201
	Experimental	14	17,11	239,50			
	Total	29					

As the table illustrates, the mean pre-test score of the experimental group is calculated as 17.11 and for the control group it is 13.03. The U- test demonstrated that there was not a statistically significant difference between pre-test scores of the experimental and control groups. ($z=-1,299$; $p>0.05$). In other words, it can be said that they have almost equal proficiency level before the experiment.

4.2. The Results for the Research Question 2

Research Question 2: Is there a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group students?

In order to address research question two, The Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test analysis was conducted. The pre- and post test results of the experimental group were compared by using this test analysis. These results are shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6. The Results of The Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test for Pretest-Posttest Scores of Experimental Group Students

PostTest - PreTest	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	z	p
Negative Ranks	0(a)	0,00	0,00	-3,190	,001
Positive Ranks	13(b)	8,00	120,00		
Ties	1(c)				

According to Table 6, the results of the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test conducted to determine whether there was any difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group students indicated that there was a significant difference between the mean scores ($z=-3.190$, $p<0.05$). In other words, the achievement level of the experimental group increased after the test period ended. This result shows that using cartoons in teaching grammar had a positive effect on students' achievement in learning the grammar points. It can be inferred that using cartoons attracted the students' attention and it provided a permanent learning and as a result of this, they became more successful.

4.3. The Results for the Research Question 3

Research Question 3: Is there a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the control group students?

Table 7 The Results of The Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test for Pretest-Posttest Scores of Control Group Students

PostTest - PreTest	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	z	p
Negative Ranks	2(a)	4,00	8,00	-2,643	,008
Positive Ranks	11(b)	7,55	83,00		
Ties	2(c)				

Table 7 illustrates that as the mean scores ($z=-2,643$, $p<0.05$) indicate, there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the control group students. This result verifies that there is an increase in their achievement level. This is considered to be natural as those students were also engaged in some learning activities.

4.4. The Results for the Research Question 4

Research Question 4: Is there a significant difference between the posttest scores of the experimental and control group students?

The Mann Whitney U test results of the posttest scores of the students in the experimental and control groups related to the grammar learning are given in Table 8.

Table 8 The results of the Mann-Whitney U Test that Was Performed To Determine Whether Posttest Scores Of The Experimental And Control Groups Were Different.

Grup	n	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	z	p
Control	15	10,53	158,00			
PostTest Experimental	14	19,79	277,00	38,000	-2,934	,003
Total	29					

The results reported above reveal that there is a statistically significant difference between the post-achievement test scores of the two groups ($p < 0.05$), which verifies the main hypothesis of this study. Therefore, it is possible to say that the experimental group has reached a higher achievement level than the control group, after being exposed to cartoons during grammar teaching. Therefore, it can be said that cartoons used during the lessons provided a more permanent learning, and this contributed positively to the achievement of the students. In other words, cartoons have created a significant effect on the students' learning in the English lessons of the 8th grade classes.

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

This study has focused on investigating the possible effects of using cartoons in EFL classes on the students' learning grammar.

Grammar teaching has always been one of the the most important and controversial issues for decades. It has been discussed for a long time whether it is necessary to teach grammar in the language learning process. There have also been debates about how to teach grammar throughout the history of language teaching. And these debates have enabled different kinds of grammar teaching strategies and techniques to be suggested.

It is known that for most students, grammar constitutes a boring part of language learning process as it is considered to include lots of rules to be learned. There have also been suggestions about how to make lessons more enjoyable for the students. Humour, which is known to create a relaxing and intimate social atmosphere in real life, is considered to be beneficial when it is embeded in the class activities. Cartoons, which contain visual humorous elements, are appropriate tools to provide a relaxed atmosphere and lower the anxiety in the language class. High motivation and willingness are also important factors which influence the learning process. It can be asserted that humourous materials such as cartoons help to increase students' motivation.

The study, which was based on a pretest-posttest design with control and experimental groups, was conducted with 8th grade students in a secondary school. At the beginning of study, a pre test was applied to both control and experimental groups to have an idea about their current knowledge on the determined teaching points. It was seen that there was not significant difference about their knowledge on grammar points according to the test results ($p = 0.201 > 0.05$). That means that the two groups had statistically similar achievement levels before the application of this study, which is favoured in an experimental study.

As the study required, while the experimental group was exposed to the lessons which includes the use of cartoons, the control group was usually taught with traditional techniques and especially without using any humourous materials. Each grammar point was taught in one week, and at the end of tenth week, post tests were applied to both control and experimental groups. The findings have been analysed by IBM SPSS Statistics data analysis program. The results of the study have revealed that there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the control group students, that the achievement level of the experimental group significantly increased after the test period ended, and that there is a statistically significant difference between the post-achievement test scores of the two groups ($p = 0.003 < 0.05$), which means that the experimental group has reached a higher achievement level than the control group.

From the results of the study, the following points can be maintained along with some suggestions:

1. The results verify that using cartoons in grammar teaching has a positive role on students' achievement in the English courses of the 8th grade classes in a state secondary school.
2. Choosing cartoons suitable for the students' level and interest can motivate them to learn the grammar structure.
3. Using humour makes the students feel relaxed and comfortable in classroom environment. As a result, it could be said that it students find learning grammar through cartoons more enjoyable and easier.
4. The cartoons are important tools to apply "teach in context" rule in language teaching. They make the students see the language in contexts. Hence, it could be put forward that it provides more meaningful and permanent learning.
5. In this study, the use of cartoons was restricted to teaching grammar. However, it can also be used for different skills such as vocabulary, listening and reading (at the pre-listening and pre-reading sections to arise curiosity) and speaking and writing (at the pre-speaking and pre- writing stages to increase motivation).
6. Learners of different proficiency levels and/or learners of different ages could also be the participant groups who can be taught the target language through cartoons.
7. It is agreed that finding a cartoon for every grammatical structure is not very easy. A possible way could be to generate appropriate utterances based on caricatures without captions.

As a conclusive remark, it can be pointed out that this study has aimed to reflect the positive effects of using cartoons in grammar teaching on students' achievements, and the study has revealed that the achievement of the EFL students on grammar is positively affected by the use of cartoons in grammar lessons.

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