

DIFFICULTIES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING PRESENT PROGRESS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

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Abstract: *The following essay expresses information about the challenges that L2 learners come across while learning the English language. Furthermore, it discusses some possible solutions to avoid such problems in an effective way.*

Key words: *Non -native language learners, progressive tense, state verbs, conception, verb categories.*

Introduction

While learning the grammar of any foreign language, language learners make several grammar mistakes till they master that very grammar rule. Non-native language users develop their grammatical proficiency through the mistakes they have made and the corrections or remedial activities that their language instructor provided. At first sight, present progressive seems not so complicated, yet there are some learners, like our participant, who find it difficult to differentiate from present simple, as in their native language, both tenses can be expressed with only one tense. Before discussing the learning and teaching problems of progressive education, we aimed to demonstrate a brief introduction to that very tense.

Research and procedure

Zhiri (2017) believes that, as there are three present tenses in English, the present progressive is one of the most complex aspects since it is applied in different contexts. This tense is marked by the use of the auxiliary be (present form) and V +ing. As in, Soliha is listening to music. Some linguists, namely Vendler (1957) and Comrie (1976), defined four categories of English verbs, which are listed below:

- **States** :be, desire, possess, and adore
- **Activities** :run, play, laugh, fall asleep, walk are examples of active verbs that express ongoing actions (activities).
- **Accomplishment** : run (a mile), construct (a house).
- **Achievement** : Break (a stick), reach (the top).

According to Leech and Svartvik (2013), the verbs that "most commonly adopt the progressive aspect are verbs expressing activities (walk, read, drink, write, study, etc.) or processes (change, grow, widen, improve, etc.)," (p. 52). It generally refers to a transient activity ongoing as a part of the present tense. This action must be in some way unfinished.

The action, in this regard, extends into the past and into the future, in that neither the beginning nor the end are determined.

The present progressive is also perceived as describing actions or events happening around the moment of speaking (occurring at the time of the utterance). The action, in this sense, is seen as turning around the moment NOW.

This latter can refer to the present moment, meaning "at the time being," as in John is washing his car now. It can also refer to a longer action happening around now. NOW in this context can mean this second, today, this month, this year, or even this century, as in She is studying to become an engineer.

Apart from this, the progressive reveals a habitual meaning as well. Comrie (1976) states that "the English progressive can refer to a habitual situation that holds for a relatively limited period." These habits are of a transient nature; they do not last long, as in you smoking too much (these days)! Awful habits are also described using the present progressive. Lewis (1986) claims that the progressive can express the speaker's surprise or annoyance at the unexpectedly high frequency of the event (p. 97), as in You are always losing your keys!

The present progressive is also used to describe the actions happen near the future, indicating future arrangements or plans. In this regard, the present progressive is expressed by means of verbs denoting movement from one place or condition to another. Leech and Svartvik (2013) point out that "the present progressive is used for future events resulting from a present plan, program, or arrangement" (p. 55). For expressing the ideas in the future using present continuous, the present progressive must be accompanied with some future time signals words that indicate future time, such as tomorrow, next week, next month, etc., as I am flying to London tomorrow.

The phrase "present progressive" is commonly used to describe recent developments or rising trends, for example, *The number of unemployment is increasing day by day*. It's common to use phrases like "these days" and "nowadays" in this context. To sum it all up, foreign English language learners need to be aware of the present progressive in order to participate and in speech effectively. It has various meanings and different usage as well.

The most common mistakes done by students :

1.confusion with present simple

This is one of the most frequently mistakes that the language learners encounter very often. For example: my father clean his car now instead of My father *is cleaning* his car now.

2. Confusion while adding auxiliaries:

This mistake can occur while the language learners may not have enough information about singular and plural forms of nouns or they might have hesitation how to choose auxiliary verbs :

Wrong -children is playing in the playground right now .

Correct :(Children are playing in the ground right now)

3. Omission of TO BE

This type of mistakes is also occasionally seen in some learners' writing as well speaking process. Those students who are learning present progressive at the very

beginning level and they totally forget about the auxiliary verb and only add -ing form to create this tense.

Example:

-My father cleaning his car at the moment .

-(My father *is cleaning* his car at the moment.)

4. Difficulties in adding 'ing' forms

In some cases students used the auxiliaries correctly. But they did not add 'ing' after auxiliaries. Instead of adding 'ing' they wrote the verb in simple present.

Examples: -My parents are shop right now.

-My parents are shops right now.

(My parents are shopping now.)

Difficulties in teaching present progressive :

It is an undeniable fact that not all language instructors but some of them minimize the value of the lexical aspect of grammatical constructions. They concentrate more on emphasizing form than meaning. Some teachers don't even provide their students the knowledge they need for one reason or another. For instance, some instructors fail to emphasize in their instruction the various contexts in which the present progressive is used. Some educators encourage their pupils to only use the present progressive in circumstances that are now occurring or at the moment that they are speaking. In fact, we think that this issue is the fundamental cause of pupils' failure to master this concept. Students become victims to this particular context of usage impact. Most students lack the knowledge necessary to understand that a concept like the present progressive is characterized by a variety of meanings and complex application, especially in the early learning phases. Given everything that has been covered in this research, it is clear that a fresh approach or unique grammar course that may help students become more proficient with the usage of tense and aspect in particular is urgently needed. A new authentic comprehensive resource is also required to give students the information and abilities they need to perform more effectively at the discourse level.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the present progressive tense is a crucial aspect of English grammar, reflective of ongoing actions, recent developments, and evolving trends. It plays a pivotal role in effective communication, particularly when conveying present activities and emerging situations. However, foreign language learners do encounter common challenges and mistakes when mastering this grammatical structure.

The most common errors, such as confusion with the present simple, auxiliary verb misplacement, omission of "to be," and difficulties in adding '-ing' forms, reveal crucial areas where students often need additional support and guidance.

Moreover, difficulties in teaching the present progressive further compound the challenges faced by learners. Emphasizing form over meaning and limiting the understanding of varied contexts in which the present progressive is used contributes to the struggle of students to grasp its nuanced applications.

Conclusively, there is a compelling need for a fresh and comprehensive resource that not only equips students with the requisite knowledge but also cultivates their abilities to apply

the present progressive tense proficiently across various real-world contexts. By addressing these challenges in language education, educators and learners alike can ensure a more thorough and effective grasp of this essential grammatical concept.

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