CHAPTER 6
PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1. Need for Instruction in Learning

A person has ‘learned’ a Foreign Language when

a. he has mastered the sound system, and can understand the stream of speech and achieve an understandable production of it, and

b. he has made the structural devices, that is, the basic arrangements of utterances, matters of automatic habit.

This degree of mastery can be achieved by means of a scientific approach with satisfactorily selected and organized materials. Adults are usually unwilling or are incapable of starting again at fundamentals of the language and building up new habits. Accuracy of sound, of structural forms, and of arrangement must become automatic before a student is ready to expand his proficiency in the language.

The only ‘correctness’ there can be in any language is the actual usage of the native speakers of that language. In learning English, the learner must attempt to imitate exactly the forms, the structures, and the mode of utterance of the native speakers of the particular kind of English he/she wishes to learn.
Errors made have to be corrected in order that the learner achieves a good level of mastery over the TL. Instruction provides this correction, if carried out in a systematic manner. According to Krashen [1982] Explicit Formal Instruction [EFI] or grammar teaching is an obstacle to L₂ learning. However, Pavesil [1986] has shown that the rate of learning is altered by instruction. In addition, instructed learners demonstrate higher ultimate achievement.

Pica [1984] and Harley [1993] have shown the importance of instruction in L₂ learning. Studies conducted by Pica have shown that taught learners produce errors of redundancy; they oversupply grammatical morphology. Though this is an error, it has the effect of inhibiting the development of pidginized forms of IL. A second related positive effect according to Harley of a code focused L₂ instruction is that it brings about defossilisation. Fossilisation is desirable only when TL features are fossilised. When errors are fossilised, improvement is blocked. Harley emphasizes the importance of teaching that addresses the barrier-breaking principle.

Recent studies have shown that EFI does have an effect on production accuracy. According to Fotos [1993] “formal instruction appears to lead to acquisition only indirectly and after a delay”. It is also useful in the process of self-monitoring. “Instruction can improve accuracy in carefully planned speech production” [Ellis
1990]. Ellis also advocates Interpretation Based Grammar Teaching. He observes that the teaching of Grammar can help develop implicit L₂ knowledge or learning. It can also facilitate the intake of unknown features of the L₂ grammar by bringing about awareness.

6.2. Need for Correction

Many arguments favour correction. The arguments are:

a. First and foremost correction works: Fathman and Whalley [1990] report that correcting grammar errors universally [for every student and every composition] brought about improvement of the grammar he writes.

b. Learners want to be corrected: Cathcart and Olsen [1976] showed that students want their oral errors to be corrected. Leiki [1976] showed that 100% of student writers wanted all their written errors corrected.

c. There is no evidence that correction adversely affects learning cognitively. Correction, provided it is not miscorrection, does not lead to misunderstanding and mislearning. Correction brings about awareness. For learning to take place a form of “arousal” is necessary.

d. Correction is beneficial to “low input generation” who do not self-correct.
e. Correction is necessary where the language-processing task is difficult, since in such cases the learners will be unable to self-correct. Task difficulty depends on the distance between the learners’ current level of comfortable processing capacity and the level required by the task. Where the distance is great the teacher will need to offer corrective assistance.

f. The teacher should offer correction according to the deviance in the learners’ production. If the deviance has the status of a mere slip, a raised eyebrow would be sufficient to signal its existence. In the case of a mistake, the teacher has to prompt the learners to alter their hypothesis. In the case of an error, some remediation is necessary in the form of an extra or new teaching, to induce the learners to restructure their knowledge of the point in question.

6.2.1. Correction Techniques

The correction techniques employed should bring about improvements in accuracy. It should also be efficient in the sense of requiring the least effort to carry out by the teachers and to register by the learners.

6.2.2. Manner of Correction

Corrections should be sensitively executed. They should not embarrass the learner. The corrections should be made in such a way that they appear as slips and the corrections as incidental and not likely to disrupt the message. Then the learner is also in a
Correction should be non-threatening:

a. Learner self-correction is the most palatative non-threatening form of correction. The teacher should give ‘wait-time’ to the learner for self-correction.

b. Another way non-threatening correction can be achieved in class is for the correction to be aimed at the whole class rather than singling out individual students.

c. In correction of spoken errors, the more sensitive the learners, the more gentle should be the correction.

d. Computer technology offers a further way to make correction less traumatic by delivering it in a private rather than a social context.

A study of student preferences will also help error correction. Student feedback will give an idea to the teachers on how the students want to be corrected. Leiki [1991] established that students want all their errors to be corrected. She also established that students “wanted their teachers to show where the error was and to give a clue about how to correct it”. They preferred to solve the correction problems themselves.

Studies conducted by Kaufmann [1993] indicated that overlooking the erroneous form was an acceptable behaviour
“among friends”. From teachers, on the other hand, they expected corrections.

Corrections should be made using a two stage approach. The first step marks errors in the composition and the second step marks the infelicities in the construction. The final reformulation gives the correct construction. This stepwise approach to correction is advisable as learning takes place a bit at a time and learners will learn and correct their output according to a fixed programme that gradually approximates their knowledge to Target Language norms.

Learners should also be encouraged to understand and interpret their errors. They should be made to compare their IL versions with the TL versions. They should also be made to compare their NL versions with the TL version. In other words, the learners themselves become Error Analysts and Contrastive Analysts. By doing so they develop Language Awareness which is a very important aspect of Language learning.

6.3. Need for Good Teaching Material

If an adult is to gain satisfactory proficiency in a Foreign Language most quickly and easily, he/she must have satisfactory materials upon which to work. He/She must have really important items of the language selected and arranged in a properly related
sequence with special emphasis upon the chief trouble spots. With the desired materials, the student must be willing to give himself/herself whole-heartedly to the strenuous business of learning the new language. The student must be willing to practise and use the new language constantly to himself/herself in reacting to every situation. Constant practice and use of the language forms being learned must be attempted by the student, if he/she is to make really effective use of the materials that are scientifically chosen and arranged for the efficient mastery of a Foreign Language.

To ‘master’ a language, the fundamentals of the language have to be learned as a set of habits for oral production and reception. The basic drill- the repeated repetitions of the patterns produced by a native speaker is the most economical way of thoroughly learning the structure of a language.

Various methods can be used by the teacher to teach the correct forms but it is important that the teacher selects the best method to teach the various aspects of the language. The learner of the Second Language has to acquire mastery over vocabulary, sentence patterns, correct stress, intonation patterns and idiomatic use of the language. This mastery consists in an ability to use correctly and without thought or effort, appropriate sentence patterns and phrase patterns.
6.4. General Teaching Strategies

6.4.1. Practising Sounds

As it is not the purpose of this paper to deal with the Teaching of Sounds of the Language, this aspect is only briefly mentioned here.

Normally most sounds will be picked up by the speaker but some sounds will be difficult. The teacher should focus on those sounds that the students find difficult or make mistakes in pronunciation without being aware of it. The basic steps for the teacher to use are:

a. To say the sound clearly in isolation and in one or two words and the students should be made to repeat the sound in chorus and individually.

b. If students confuse two similar sounds, such sounds should be contrasted so that students can hear the difference clearly.

c. If students have difficulty in producing a particular sound (usually because it does not exist in their L₁) the teacher should describe how the sound is pronounced in a way the students understand.

The teacher can then give a list of minimal pairs and ask the students to say them separately and then in comparison bringing out the contrast.

6.4.1. Teaching of Sentence Patterns

The patterns should be taught in a graded manner from
the simplest to the most difficult. The learner who is presented with a multiplicity of sentence patterns or phrase patterns, often finds it very difficult to distinguish the difference between the very many that he/she comes across. The first step in preventing the difficulty is that the learner should not be allowed to see too many varieties at too early a stage. This can be done by making the reading of the language learner so controlled that he/she is not confused by the sentence patterns which are strange to him/her. The second step is teaching the Grammar of Modern English in a form which can be applied in practical fashion to the language. The grammatical materials of any language are devices of word change and of word arrangement. In English, these devices are:

a. Word Order

b. Use of Structural Particles (Pronouns, Prepositions, Relatives and the like)

c. The Few Living Inflections.

Word Order lies at the base of all sentence structures in English. The simplest pattern for a straightforward plain statement in English is the Three-Part-Pattern, SVO. This Three-Part-Pattern runs through many variations to complicated sentences.

Structural Particles are important characteristics of Sentence Structure. Two factors have to be particularly emphasised. They are:
1. Structural Particles bear a multitude of meanings.

2. Structural Words show an amazing ability in the formation of units of language. It is to be noted that these units are different in meaning from the meanings of the root words of which they are built.

   e.g. to get on with, notwithstanding.

   Inflections, the third grammatical device, used in English rank very low. Modern English has only five inflections. Difficulties and Errors arise not from uncertainty about the inflection, but from the use of inflections in word groups. Errors also arise due to confusion between Countable and Uncountable Nouns. This can be learned by use of examples.

   Errors can be avoided by concentrating attention from the earliest stages on the fixed designs to which word groups must conform in order to make sentences and phrases which are correct according to English usage.

   The easiest way to practise the structure would be to do repetition drill. This makes the students familiar with the structure. One type of substitution practice would be as follows:

   The teacher gives prompts and gets the students to give examples. This would keep the class more active, and gives students practice in forming the structure themselves. With a large class there are two main ways:
1. By getting responses from individual students (to be sure the response is correct) and then getting the whole class to repeat in chorus.
2. To give the weaker students a chance to say something. The teacher can get two or three students to respond to each prompt.
3. With smaller classes the students could respond individually.

However, there is no single best method for correcting errors. The most important thing is for the teacher to be flexible and be aware of the effect Error correction has on each learner. For the teacher to be good and effective, use should be made of different strategies according to the kind of error, the ability and personality of the student, and the general atmosphere of the class.

6.5. Teaching / Correcting Errors of Malayalee Learners

A detailed study of the errors committed by speakers of Malayalam revealed that, when learning English as a Second Language, these learners found many areas of the English Language difficult to master e.g. Sentence Patterns, Word Order, Concord, Tense, Use of Articles, Use of Prepositions, Phrases, certain Words and Expressions.

It is not possible to deal with all types of errors in this study. This researcher proposes to deal with certain specific areas which created much difficulty and which also prevented a clear understanding of ideas conveyed. These areas are the following:
1. Sentence Pattern (Word Order).

2. Use of Articles.

3. Use of Prepositions.


5. Tense.

6. Vocabulary

6.5.1. Sentence patterns

The major components of a sentence are

Subject of the sentence = S
The main Verb = V
The Object of the sentence = O
Indirect Object = Oi
Direct Object = Od
Predicative/ Complement = P
Structural Verb = v.

e.g. ‘can do’ = v + V

Negative = n.

e.g. ‘cannot’ = v + n

Substitute Subject = s.

e.g. ‘It is I’ = s + V + S

Interrogation = x?.

e.g. ‘What is that?’ = x? + V + S

Most of the codes of letters used are those devised by Otto
Jesperson (Analytic Syntax, Otto Jesperson, Copenhagen, 1937).

6.5.1.1. Teaching Statements

The simplest pattern in English is S V O.

e.g. Lalitha bought a saree.

The Malayalee, when trying to express the idea in English, produces

Lalitha saree bought.
M- l litha sa:ri va:nni

This error is committed by a majority of the learners and therefore, merits serious attention. The structure S V O is the simplest and the basis of all sentences in English. Therefore it is absolutely necessary that the L₂ learner gets a firm hold on the structure. It is a well known fact that effective learning can be brought about through repetition. There is no other better technique than the Drill method. The Substitution Table is the most effective means by which any sentence pattern can taught.

The structure S V O can be drilled by bringing in variety to the Table in the following ways:

1. Variation in Subject
2. Variation in Verb
3. Variation in Object.

Table 1
Substitution Table to drill the Structure S V O with Variation in the Subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>O</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The girl</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My sister</td>
<td>bought</td>
<td>a bag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2
Substitution Table to drill the Structure S V O with Variation in the Verb form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>O</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>bought</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The girl</td>
<td>made</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My sister</td>
<td>is making</td>
<td>a bag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She</td>
<td>has</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lost</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3
Substitution Table to drill the Structure S V O with Variation in the Object

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>O</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>bought</td>
<td>a bag</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This technique drills the pattern into the learner’s mind. The teacher should also point out to the learner the Word Order in his/her L₁ (in this case Malayalam). In Malayalam, the Word Order is S O V.

( meri baːɡ vaːnːi )

S O V

The learner should be made aware of the difference in the structure of the two languages that he/she comes across.

**Teaching Point:**

The teacher should bring to the notice of the learner that in his/her L₁ (Malayalam)

i. the V comes at the end of the sentence and

ii. the O comes before the V

In his L₂ (English)

i. the V is at the centre of the structure and

ii. the O comes after the V.

It is this researcher’s experience that a Sentence Pattern or Word Order can be impressed upon the learner by using:
1. The substitution table (i.e. reinforcing a habit as propounded by the Structuralists).

2. Encouraging the learner’s cognitive ability by making him/her aware of the difference in structure in his/her $L_1$ and that of $L_2$.

Table 4
A Comparative Study of Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Malayalam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S V O</td>
<td>S O V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I eat idli</td>
<td>na:n idli tinnu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like ice-cream</td>
<td>eniyk aiskrim istama:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not like Maths</td>
<td>eniyk kankk istamalla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I drink tea</td>
<td>na:n ca:ja kudikkum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand Hindi</td>
<td>eniyk hindi man ssila:vum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To reinforce the learning, different types of exercises like the following can be given:

1. Exercise for self correction – this will make the learner become aware of the error.

2. Exercise in translation – this will encourage creative thinking.
i. Correct the order of words, if necessary:

a. Bread he wants.

b. Chappathi makes she.

c. Sings a song he.

d. Teaches English she.

e. He gave a pen.

f. She a hat bought.

g. Music I love.

h. The boy received a prize.

i. Apple cut he.

j. Washed man the car the.

ii. Translate the following:

a. harikk li:l istama:n

b. kutti pa:l kutikkum

c. amma bhaksanam unda:kkum.

d. avan kriket kalikkum.

e. avar te:ve: ka:num.

Using the above mentioned techniques, this researcher has successfully trained the students in correct use of the structure in statements.

6.5.1.2. Teaching the Interrogative Construction

It is relevant to mention in this context the problems created in the Interrogative Construction. It has been found that
the L₂ learners use the same patterns in questions as those of statements. For example, instead of asking,

   When did you come?

An L₂ learner would ask,

a. When you came? or

b. You when came?

A study of the errors in the above sentences revealed that the causes for the same were found to be thus-

1. The learner is aware that the question word is to be used.
   So he/she uses “when” or some other relevant question word and the Word Order followed is either that in ‘a’ or that in ‘b’.

2. He/She uses ‘a’, because the learner knows the rule (as it has been taught to him/her) that the Sentence Pattern in Statements in English is S V / S V O and therefore he/she applies it.

3. He/She uses ‘b’, when he/she thinks first in his/her L₁ and then translates it.
   “you when came” is an exact translation of “ni: epo:l vannu?”

The teacher of English should be aware of the above facts and the teaching done should be modified accordingly. Before teaching the interrogative construction, the learner should be introduced to the three types of Interrogatives which are:

i. ‘Wh’ Interrogative
ii ‘Yes/No’ Interrogative

iii Tag Questions.

6.5.1.2.1. ‘Wh’ Interrogative

The first step in teaching the ‘Wh’ Interrogative is to introduce the learner to the main interrogative words— who, which, where, why, and how.

To help him remember them, it should be pointed out that these question words begin with ‘wh’, except in the case of ‘how’, where ‘wh’ is reversed.

What ( thing – ent )

`Who (person – a:r )

When ( time – epo:l)

Where ( place – evide)

Why ( reason – endu kond )

How ( manner – enine)

Table 5

Substitution Table to Teach the Interrogative “What”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Word X</th>
<th></th>
<th>S</th>
<th>V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
What Did he Alice she they do? say? eat? teach?

Table 6
Substitution table to Teach the Interrogatives “How, When, Where and Why”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question word X</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How</td>
<td></td>
<td>he</td>
<td>go?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>did</td>
<td>Alice</td>
<td>run?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td></td>
<td>Biju</td>
<td>drink?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why</td>
<td></td>
<td>She</td>
<td>sing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>they</td>
<td>dance?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other exercises that can be used are the following:
i. Translate:
   a. Si:ta epo:l vannu?
   b. Kutti evide po:yi?
   c. Aya:l endin vannu?
d. avan avide e ine etti?

e. Ath a:r thinnu?

ii. Construct meaningful sentences using the verbs - eat, write, buy, and come.

6.5.1.2.2. ‘Yes/No’ Interrogative Construction

Yes/No: Questions

The pattern is

v + S + V

Aux + Subject + Verb.

e.g.

Can you dance?

Has she come?

Will Hari sing?

Does she like mango pickle?

Is she happy?

Table 7

Substitution Table to Teach the Interrogative Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>v</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
The Statement and the Question forms can be imprinted in the learners using the Question/Answer Model.

**Table 8**
**Substitution Table to Teach the Statement and the Question Forms through Comparison of Structures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can Mary dance?</td>
<td>Yes, Mary can dance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will John sing?</td>
<td>No, John will not sing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is he asleep?</td>
<td>Yes, he is asleep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you a car?</td>
<td>Yes, I have a car.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Point**

The error in construction occurs because, the learner omits the auxiliary ‘did’ and uses the same order for statements in English. e.g. Why you eat mango? (x S V O).
He adds the question word because the sentence is a question. The teacher should make it clear that

1. ‘did’ (do/does) should be placed before the Subject in Questions asking information,

2. The sentence pattern is

   \[ X + \text{did} + S + V, \]

3. The aux(v) is placed before the Subject and the Verb after it. The pattern is

   \[ v + S + V. \]

6.5.1.2.3. Teaching Tag Questions

Tag Questions create as much difficulty as the other question forms. The problem arises, because the Malayalam Language does not have such a usage. The main Tag Questions in English are the following:

- is / isn’t + S;
- are / aren’t + S;
- was / wasn’t + S;
- were / weren’t + S;
- have / haven’t + S;
- has / hasn’t + S;
- had / hadn’t + S;
- does / doesn’t + S;
- did / didn’t + S;
A unique case is “am”.

The Tag for “am” is “ aren’t I”.

the Malayalee learner has only one equivalent ‘alle:’. So he uses isn’t it. Tags can be taught in the following simple steps:

**Teaching Point**

Step i. Awareness of the structure of the tag.

The structure of the tag:

\[ \text{aux} + \text{S} \]

e.g. is he, is she, are they.

Step ii. The Positive and Negative Tag:

e.g. is he / isn’t he

is she / isn’t she

are they / aren’t they.

have they/ haven’t they

has she/ hasn’t she

Step iii. Point out the fact that, when the statement is Positive, the Tag is Negative and vice-versa.

Step iv. When there is no auxiliary in the statement, a form of ‘do’ (do/does/ did) should be used.

e.g.

1. He came, didn’t he?
2. He laughed at me, didn’t he?
3. She sang well, didn’t she?
4. She cried, didn’t she?
5. He works hard, doesn’t he?
6. She cooks well, doesn’t she?

As in teaching other structures the Substitution Tables are the best to teach Tag Questions.

Table 9
Substitution Table to Teach the Negative Tag

A: To Teach the Negative Tag

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mary</th>
<th>She</th>
<th>The girl</th>
<th>He</th>
<th>John</th>
<th>The boy</th>
<th>happy</th>
<th>sad</th>
<th>calm</th>
<th>cheerful</th>
<th>afraid</th>
<th>isn’t</th>
<th>isn’t</th>
<th>she?</th>
<th>he?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 10
Substitution Table to Teach the Positive Tag

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mary</th>
<th>She</th>
<th>The girl</th>
<th>He</th>
<th>isn’t</th>
<th>isn’t</th>
<th>happy</th>
<th>sad</th>
<th>calm</th>
<th>cheerful</th>
<th>isn’t</th>
<th>is</th>
<th>she?</th>
<th>he?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Supply the correct Tag:

1. They have come, --------.
2. He is here, --------.
3. They aren’t present, ------.
4. The boys have won, --------.
5. They can come, --------.

Correct the following, if necessary:

1. Akbar was a great king, isn’t it?
2. He spoke well, isn’t it?
3. They have a car, aren’t they?
4. This is a very useful pen, isn’t this?
5. There are five chairs in the room, isn’t it?
6. She sings well, doesn’t she?

Instances of error in structure can best be remedied using substitution table, followed by an explanation by the teacher, which points out to the learner the differences in language are in his/her L₁ and in L₂.

Once the learner grasps the fundamentals of the structure in basic statements and in questions, he/she should be led to more difficult structures found in compound and complex sentences.
It is this researcher’s experience that as a joint exercise, the teaching/learning process involving the learners works wonders. This can be done by forming the learners into groups and then

1. making them form their own substitution tables, and
2. making some members give their idea in their L₁ and making others give it in L₂.

The teacher can monitor the work of the learners. This encourages active participation. The students also experience a sense of achievement, which motivates them to learn more. Above all, it completely removes the boredom of a mechanical substitution table exercise.

**6.5.2. Articles**

The use of Articles in English:

Articles in English are of two types:-

i. Indefinite (a / an) e.g. a pen, an apple.

ii. Definite (the) e.g. the house.

The selection between ‘the’, and ‘a/an’ is determined by, whether a specific Noun is being introduced. When a Subject is first introduced, a / an is used. After that ‘the’ is used.

There are a number of instances, where the Article is used in English. Articles are considered Determiners.

**6.5.2.1. The Indefinite Article**

A / an precedes Count Nouns.
e.g.

A cat jumped past just now.

An apple a day keeps the doctor away.

Non-count Nouns have no Determiners.

e.g.

Rice is the staple food of Indians.

The Article a / an is used to refer to person(s), thing(s), event(s) etc.

e.g.

1. A man came here to see you.
2. A ball is a spherical object.
3. A football game is in progress now.

The Indefinite Article is also used to signify a membership in the class of items indicated by the following Noun-head.

e.g.

1. She is a singer.
2. Her father is a teacher.

6.5.2.2. The Article ‘the’

The Article ‘the’ is normally used for:

i. Subsequent reference to person(s), thing(s) or event(s).

e.g.

1. The man in blue shirt is my father.
2. The book on the table is a new one.
3. The party held yesterday was a grand success.

ii. For special reference.

e.g.

1. The earth is round.

2. The cow is a useful animal.

3. The Himalayas.

4. The Ganges.

iii. ‘The’ is also used with superlatives.

e.g.

The worst part of the ordeal is over.

The use of Articles create difficulty to the Malayalee L₂ learners. The Malayalam Language does not have equivalents to the English Articles (Definite and Indefinite).

English a / an is sometimes translated as ‘oru’ meaning one.

e.g. That is a cow.

M- Ad oru pasu a:n.

Sometimes there is no need for the article equivalent in Malayalam.

e.g. Last night we saw a film.

M- nenal in le ra:tri sinema kandu.

**Teaching Point**

The difference in the use of ‘a’ or ‘an’ can be taught by pointing out to the Malayalee L₂ students that
1. Those words which begin with the sounds corresponding to the Malayalam sounds
a  a:  i  i:  u  u:  e  e:  ai  o  o:
au
have to be preceded by ‘an’ and the others by ‘a’. This researcher has been convinced of the efficacy of this suggestion. This brought better results when compared with the statement that ‘an’ precedes words beginning with vowels
a, e, i, o, u.
This can be proved in the following manner:
Any learner of English knows the example - the Article ‘an’ is used before ‘hour’ (an hour), and before ‘honest’ (an honest man), though they begin with the consonant ‘h’. It should be pointed out and explained that both words begin with vowel sounds /a/ and / / though they begin with the consonant ‘h’ and therefore the Article ‘an’ is used.

A similar case is the use of the Article ‘a’ before ‘useful’ (a useful thing) because the first sound is / / - a consonant, though the word begins with the vowel ‘u’.

2. The use of the definite article ‘the’ can be taught by giving the idea that the use of ‘the’ is normally found in the following situations:
   i. Such contexts, where the Malayalam word ‘ad ’ is used.
ii. When definiteness is intended.

iii. When there is only one of its kind.

Exercises: The use of Articles can be taught using the following types of exercises.

Exercise 1

Fill up the blanks with correct articles ‘ a / an / the’:

a. It is -- book.

b. There is -- cat under the chair.

c. He eats -- apple.

d. There is -- umbrella on the table.

e. -- book on -- is mine.

f. Today is -- first day of the new academic year.

g. -- programme is interesting.

h. -- picture on -- wall looks beautiful.

i. There is -- wonderful scene in the movie.

j. -- cup-board is open.

Exercise 2.

Insert Articles:

This is -- story from -- Bible. -- story gives -- moral. -- moral is that good people will succeed in -- end. They undergo -- lot of suffering. But God gives them -- strength to bear their tribulations. He saves them and helps them attain salvation.
The first type of exercise trains the learner with the use of the correct Article before words beginning with vowels and consonant sounds. The second type of exercise makes them aware of the difference in the use of the Definite Article and the Indefinite Article.

6.5.3. Concord

This is an area, which the learners of English as a Second Language always have trouble with. The term “concord” means agreement. In Grammar, this refers to the formal agreement in Person, Number, Gender or Tense between two or more parts of a sentence.

6.5.3.1. Concord of person

Concord of person occurs between

1. A Subject and its finite Verb.

   e.g.

   1. He sings well.
   2. They sing well.

   In 1, the Singular Subject ‘He’ takes the Singular Verb ‘sings’.
   In 2, the Plural Subject ‘They’ takes the Plural Verb ‘sing’.

   It has been found that this concept created problems for the Malayalee learners of English and the teachers of English have to pay special attention to this point. They do not change the form of
the Verb. The Verb remains ‘sing’ in both instances. In other words, the sentences 1 and 2 would be,

He sing well, and

They sing well,
respectively.

The learner cannot be blamed, because in his L₁ (Malayalam), the word used for ‘sing’ (pa:dum) remains unchanged, whatever be the Number of the Subject.

M- avan (he) nanna:yi pa:dum.

M- avar (they) nanna:yi pa:dum.

**Teaching Point**

The teacher has to drill the concept of Verb-change into the learner. The teacher can point out that, when the Subject has an ‘s’ (plural), the Verb has no ‘s’, and when the Subject has no ‘s’ (singular), then the Verb has ‘s’. A graphic representation of the idea would be as follows:

\[
S + O \rightarrow V + s.
\]

Boy eats.

She dances

\[
S + s \rightarrow V + O
\]

Boys eat

They dance

Use can be made of the following substitution tables.
Table 11
Substitution Table to Teach the Form of the Verb when the Subject is Singular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb 1</th>
<th>Verb 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She</td>
<td>dances</td>
<td>beautifully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hari</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The girl</td>
<td>sings</td>
<td>very well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The boy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The man</td>
<td>speaks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The woman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12
Substitution Table to Teach the Form of the Verb when the Subject is Plural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb 1</th>
<th>Verb 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>dance</td>
<td>beautifully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The women</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The men</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use the correct form of the verb in the following:

a. A cow give/ gives milk.

b. He like/ likes music.

c. They sing/ sings well.

d. The cat drink/drinks milk.

e. She cook/ cooks good food.

f. The mango taste/ tastes sweet.

g. He write/ writes good English.

h. They speak/ speaks in Hindi to one another.

i. The girls make/makes beautiful dolls.

j. The boys play/plays well.

k. The woman sew/sews beautifully.

l. She go/goes to the market everyday.

**Teaching Point**

The general concept to be drilled is that, when the Subject is Plural in form and meaning, the Verb is Plural. The Plural Subject occurs,

a. When the number of the Subject is Plural,

b. When there are two Subjects (normally connected by and),

c. When the concept of the Subject is Plural.

e.g.

1. Boys are mischievous (Noun is Plural).

2. The cat and the dog are not friends (two Subjects).
3. Bread and jam is his favourite food (Subject as a single unit).
4. Bread and jam are available in the shop (two items of food as Subject).
5. The poet and dramatist is dead (one person).
6. The poet and the dramatist are speaking (the Subject refers to two persons).
7. My uncle and my guardian are helping me. (the Subject refers to two persons).
8. The Secretary and Cashier was arrested. (One person).
9. Time and tide waits for no man. (Two nouns thought of together as one).
10. Pen and ink is what I want now. (Two items but one unit).

These facts of agreement can be summarized as follows:

Table 13

To show the Agreement between the Subject and the Verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Number of the Subject</th>
<th>Nature of the Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bread and jam is his favourite food</td>
<td>Subject as a single unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread and jam are available in the shop</td>
<td>two items of food as Subject</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The poet and dramatist is dead</td>
<td>one person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The poet and the dramatist are speaking</td>
<td>the Subject refers to two persons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My uncle and my guardian are helping me</td>
<td>the Subject refers to two persons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Secretary and Cashier was arrested</td>
<td>One person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time and tide waits for no man</td>
<td>Two nouns thought of together as one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pen and ink is what I want now</td>
<td>Two items but one unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Boys are mischievous</td>
<td>Plural- (boys)</td>
<td>‘are’- plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The cat and the dog are not friends.</td>
<td>Plural- (two Subjects-the cat and the dog)</td>
<td>‘are’- plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bread and jam is his favourite food.</td>
<td>Singular (bread and jam as one unit)</td>
<td>‘is’- singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bread and jam are available in the shop.</td>
<td>Plural- (bread and jam as separate items of food)</td>
<td>‘are’- plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The poet and dramatist, is dead.</td>
<td>Singular- (one person is referred to)</td>
<td>‘is’- singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The poet and the dramatist are speaking.</td>
<td>Plural- (two persons are referred to)</td>
<td>‘are’- plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The Indian team is leaving for Mumbai.</td>
<td>Singular- (one group)</td>
<td>‘is’- singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The team are practising.</td>
<td>Plural- (the members of the team)</td>
<td>‘are’- plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The public is supporting.</td>
<td>Singular- (as one group)</td>
<td>‘is’- singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The public are not allowed in the campus.</td>
<td>Plural- (members of the public)</td>
<td>‘are’- plural</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Point**

Special cases to be mentioned:

1. Words that are Plural in form, but Singular in meaning:

   e.g. news
2. Words which occur in pairs:

   e.g. Scissors (considered plural).

3. Words referring to money, distance, and weight as a unit:

   e.g. Hundred rupees is not a big amount.

4. One of + plural Subject - Singular Verb.

   e.g. One of the boys is absent.

5a. A lot of + Count Noun – Plural Verb.

   e.g. A lot of people were present.

5b. A lot of + Non-count Noun – Singular Verb.

   e.g. A lot of sugar was added.

6. A collective noun agrees with a singular verb, when it is thought as one unit or group, and agrees with a plural verb when individuals in the group are thought of:

   e.g.

   i. The committee has agreed on the main question. (thought of as one unit)

   ii. In regard to details, the committee were divided. (members of the group thought of)

7. Either ...... or ; Neither ...... nor.

   The Verb agrees with the Noun nearest to it .

   e.g.

   a. Neither he nor I was there.

   b. Either John or Hari has stolen the watch.
c. Neither Hari nor his friends were hurt.

d. Either the boy or his parents have been mistaken.

The above usages should be specially pointed out to the learner. Substitution exercises to drill these points should be given.

When there is more than one ‘Subject’, as in the following sentences, the Verb is Plural.

e.g.

1. The cat and the tiger belong to the same family.

2. John and Mary are classmates.

3. Air and water are essential for life.

4. Their Principal and the Manager were present.

5. My uncle and my guardian are helping me.

6. A poet and a critic are visiting our College.

7. The secretary and the cashier were arrested.

Special cases to be drilled:

a. When the concept of the ‘Subject’ is Plural, the Verb is Plural.

   e.g.

   1. The team are taking rest now.

   2. The clergy are against the law.

   3. The Government are discussing the proposal.

   4. The public are shouting slogans.

   5. The jury agree on the guilt of the accused.

   6. The band were tuning their instruments.
It should be emphatically pointed out that in the above instances the Subject appears to be Singular, but the idea conveyed is Plural.

b. When the Subject is Singular in meaning, but Plural in form (because of the Noun ending in ‘-s’), the Verb is Singular.

   e.g.
   1. Mathematics is an interesting subject for me.
   2. The news is not good.
   3. Politics is a dull topic these days.
   4. Economics is a dry subject for some students.
   5. Measles is a contagious disease.
   6. Phonetics is a branch of Linguistics.

The point to be emphasized in this case is that the idea conveyed by the ‘Subject’ is singular even though it looks plural because of the ‘-s’ ending.

c. The student should be shown that

   One of + Plural Noun takes a Singular Subject, because ‘one’ is the real Subject.

   e.g.
   1. One of the boys is absent.
   2. One of the girls wants to speak to you.
   3. One of the players was injured.
   4. One of my friends has been selected.
5. One of the men is the culprit.

d. Along with the above, the following combinations have to be specially attended to:

Table 14
To Teach the Difference in Use of the Verb when the Noun is Count or Non-count

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A lot</td>
<td>Count nouns</td>
<td>Plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of</td>
<td>Non-Count</td>
<td>singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plenty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Point**

It should be emphasised that, with Count Nouns, the verb is Plural and with Non-Count Nouns, it is Singular.

Examples are given below:

1. A lot of people (Count Noun) were present (Plural Verb).
2. A lot of water (Non-count Noun) has overflowed (Singular Verb).
3. A lot of sugar (Non-count Noun) was added (Singular Verb).
4. A great deal of it (Non-count Noun) is rubbish (Singular Verb).
5. A great deal of information (Non-count Noun) has been given (Singular Verb).

6. A great deal of discussions (Count Noun) have taken place (Plural Verb).

7. Most of the money (Non-count Noun) has been spent (Singular Verb).

8. Most of the mangoes (Count Noun) are rotten (Plural Verb).

9. Plenty of milk (Non-count Noun) is available (Singular Verb).

10. Plenty of films (Count Noun) are released these days (Plural Verb).

11. Some of them (Count Noun) are relatives (plural Verb).

12. Some of the milk (Non-count Noun) was spilt (Singular Verb).

### 6.5.3.2. Concord of Gender

Concord of Gender occurs between a Noun or Pronoun and the Pronoun referring to it.

Table 15

Concord of Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Pronoun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a. Agreement of Pronoun with Antecedent:

Pronouns should agree in Person, Number, and Gender with their Antecedents.

e.g.

1. I hurt myself.
2. He hurt himself.
3. She hurt herself.
4. Birds build their nests.
5. He corrected his mistakes.
6. Mary and her friends are in the group item.
7. She gave her mother a gift.
8. He gave his sister a watch on her birthday

**Teaching Point**

The reason for error is the failure to recognize the antecedent. Exercises to stabilize the point should be given. A typical exercise would be of the following type.

Complete the following sentences using correct Pronouns:
1. The girl has gone to a film with -- mother.
2. The dog followed the master, wherever-- went.
3. Sheela and -- sister are coming tomorrow.
4. She told me that the same was a birthday gift from -- mother.
5. Mary gave -- pocket money to the blind girl.

Complete the following with suitable Pronouns:

1. The old woman said that -- daughter was ill.
2. The baby cried, because -- was hungry.
3. The woman set fire to-- clothes.
4. Her aunty gave --a necklace.
5. Sita is such a good dancer, that -- won the competition easily.

**Teaching Point**

The student should be asked to remember that the Pronoun should be placed near the Antecedent to avoid ambiguity.

Some points to be noted to avoid confusion while using Pronouns are:

1. As far as possible, avoid the indefinite ‘they’, ‘it’, or ‘you’.
2. Avoid using ‘which’, ‘this’, ‘that’ to refer to the whole idea expressed by some previous sentences or clauses.
3. The Antecedent should be clearly mentioned and it is best that it is a single word.
Concord of Tense is dealt with in detail under the section Tenses.

6.5.4. Prepositions

The Prepositions are the most frequently used of all structural words and the learner is in constant difficulty about which Preposition to use. The English Prepositions are the following: In, on, at, among, between, by, with, about, above, after, against, down, of, since, till, through, to, up, beside, besides etc.

Errors in Prepositions can be avoided, when constructions using Prepositions correctly become automatic. The drill technique is the best way to achieve this. The devise of the substitution table is the most powerful teaching instrument.

The Prepositions that create greatest problems are the following:

6.5.4.1. In / on / at

These are Prepositions of ‘time’, and ‘place’.

To teach ‘in’, ‘on’, and ‘at’ (concept of place):

Table 16

Substitution table to teach the Preposition ‘in’ (idea of space)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The cookie</th>
<th>is</th>
<th>in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The cake</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the jar</td>
<td>the box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The biscuit</td>
<td>the bottle</td>
<td>the wrapper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17
Substitution table to teach the Preposition ‘on’ (idea of surface)

| The book | the table |
| The magazine | the shelf |
| The pen | the bed |
| The toy | the floor |

Table 18
Substitution table to teach the Preposition ‘at’ (idea of a specific point)

| Who | the door |
| The girl | the window |
| The man | the gate |
| The woman | the fence |

In, on, at (concept of time):

The difference in the use of ‘in’, ‘on’, and ‘at’ can be explained as follows:

At- for a period of time.

In- for a period of time in a general sense.
On- for a period of time, more specific in reference.

e.g.

At nine O’clock in the morning, on Monday.

At twelve midnight, on 31\textsuperscript{st} December, in the year 2007.

**Teaching Point**

The teacher should focus on the following points and point them out to the student.

Prepositions ‘in’, ‘on’ and ‘at’ show time and place.

‘At’ shows

a. point in time  
b. point in space

‘On’ shows

a. a short period in time  
b. surface space

‘In’ shows

a. A long period in time  
b. Volume in space

**Exercise 1**

Construct appropriate Prepositional Phrases using the sets of words given in the table below.

Table 19

List of Words
Exercise 2

Construct sentences using the phrases thus obtained.

The concepts can be made more clear with a visual representation of the idea. For example, the concept of place can be shown in the following manner:

1. The teacher asks a student to stand at the door. Then she says, Leela is ‘at’ the door.
2. She places a piece of chalk inside the chalk-box and says – the piece of chalk is ‘in’ the box.

3. She places the box upside down and places the chalk on it and says – the piece of chalk is ‘on’ the box.

Besides drilling the concept with the help of substitution tables, the teacher can divide the class into groups and ask them to describe:
   i. the time of occurrence of event/events,
   ii. the place of occurrence of event/ events,
using the Prepositions discussed.

6.5.4.2. The Preposition ‘about’

This Preposition is unnecessarily used in expressions like ‘discuss about’
‘describe about’.

Teaching Point.

The preposition is not used in such expressions where the word ‘about’ is in the meaning of the word itself. e.g.
‘describe’ means ‘to say about something’.
‘discuss’ means ‘to talk about something’.

Table 20
Substitution Table to Teach the Use of the Prepositions ‘describe’ and ‘discuss’
Exercise:

Correct the following sentences, if necessary:

1. Mary discussed about the film with her friend.
2. Have you nothing else to talk?
3. John described about it beautifully.
4. The parents discussed about their stay in Bangalore.
5. I know what you are talking.
6. The boys described about their picnic.
7. The students discussed about the problems in the book.

6.5.4.3. The Prepositions ‘for’ and ‘since’ /’from’

The difference between the use of the prepositions, ‘for’ and ‘since’/from creates a lot of confusion in the minds of the learner.

Teaching Point

1. The first step is to explain the fact that ‘for’ is used for periods of time,
e.g. for a year, for two weeks etc.

and ‘since’/‘from’ is used with specific points in time,

e.g. from Monday, since Monday etc.

2. Using the Malayalam equivalents:

for- / tek /

since/from - /tott /

The above mentioned ways have been found successful by this researcher.

Once the concept has been understood, the usage can be drilled using the substitution table.

Table 21
Substitution Table to Teach the use of the Preposition ‘for’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I studied</th>
<th>He practised</th>
<th>She served</th>
<th>He worked in the school</th>
<th>a week</th>
<th>three hours</th>
<th>two years</th>
<th>six months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 22
Substitution Table to Teach the Use of the Prepositions ‘since/from’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Monday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
He is ill
She is absent
It is raining
Things have changed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>since</th>
<th>Wednesday morning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>from</td>
<td>Yesterday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>last Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the accident</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercise:
Use ‘for/since/from’ as required in the following:

1. My students come to see me-- time to time.
2. We have been living here -- 1980.
3. We have had no rain --three months.
4. I have been waiting -- five O’clock.
5. I have lived here -- for ten years.
6. He lived in Delhi -- 1975 to 1983.
7. I shall be at home -- 2p.m. till 6p.m.
8. I have eaten nothing -- yesterday.
10. The girl has been missing -- this morning.

6.5.4.4. The Prepositions ‘among’/’between’

Teaching Point
It should be explained here that
a. ‘Between’ is used, when only two persons/places are considered.

e.g.

1. Between you and me, there should be only friendship.
2. There should be love and trust between husband and wife.
3. There is rivalry between the two brothers.

b. ‘Among’ is used, when there are more than two to be considered.

e.g.

1. I am one among the crowd there.
2. There is a dispute over property among the brothers.
3. Loyalty among members is absolutely necessary for good teamwork.

c. The Malayalam equivalent of the Prepositions are:

between-/tammil /
among- / itayil /

Use ‘among’/ ‘between’, as required:

1. Babu sits -- Hari and Ram.
2. They quarrelled -- themselves.
4. The area that lies -- two hills is called a valley.
5. The Mediterranean Sea is -- Europe and Africa.
6. Divide the money -- the five of you.
7. Saturday is -- Friday and Sunday.
8. Let this be the understanding -- the two of us.
9. Learn to distinguish -- the good and the bad.
10. The members of the family discuss important matters----
    themselves, before taking a decision.

6.5.4.5. The Prepositions ‘beside’ /‘besides’

These Prepositions are often misused.

**Teaching point**

The difference between the two can best be explained using the
Malayalam equivalents.

beside- /arikil or atutt  /
besides – / ku:da:the /

e.g.

1. Sit beside me.
M- ente arikil irikku.

   Besides me, there are two others in the family.

2. She lay beside her little sister.
M-aval thande anujathiyude aduth  kidannu.

   Besides a sister, he has two brothers.
M- oru pengal ku:da:the av ann randu sahodaranmar und

3. He is standing beside his car.
M-avan avante karint adutt  nilkunnu.
Besides a car, he owns a jeep.

Use ‘beside’ / ‘besides’, as required:

a. My home is -- the temple.

b. -- a car, he has a jeep and a motor-cycle.

c. -- Hari, his brother and sister attended the party.

d. Come and sit --me.

e. -- hard work, luck is also a factor for success at the entrance examination.

f. He lay -- the patch of roses in the garden.

g. -- his children, his nephews and nieces were present.

h. -- being fined, he was sentenced to a term of imprisonment.

i. -- being a writer, he is also an actor.

j. She stood -- her husband during the ceremony.

Exercise:

i. Correct the following:

1. He writes his name with ink.

2. He walked in the road.

3. This box is made from wood.

4. I cannot think his name.

5. The show begins on five in the evening.

ii. Fill in the blanks with correct Prepositions:

1. He stood -- corner for a minute.

2. Come and sit – me.
3. He lives – Calicut.
4. Has he recovered – his illness.
5. She has been unconscious – hours.

It is a fact that, rules cannot completely solve the problem of the Preposition. The learner is in constant difficulty about which Preposition to use. He/She has to learn to associate the right Preposition with the right Noun or Verb and this can come only through reading and practice. This researcher’s attempt is to provide some assistance to the learner in this onerous task.

6.5.5. Tense

‘Tense’ is a Grammatical category. It refers to the form of the Verb in ‘present’ and ‘past’. These forms are used to indicate the universal concept of present time, past time and future time.

6.5.5.1. Forms of the Verb

It is not possible to teach all the forms together. The forms should be taught in a phased manner.

Teaching Point

First the learner should be made familiar with the basic Verb forms:

1. The Simple
2. The Continuous
3. The Perfective

The Simple form:

i. \( V \).

  e.g. play

ii. \( V + \text{ed} \).

  e.g. played

The Continuous form:

i. \( \text{is} + V + \text{ing} \).

  e.g. is playing

ii. \( \text{was} + V + \text{ing} \).

  e.g. was playing

The Perfective form:

i. \( \text{have} + V + \text{ed} \).

  e.g. have played

ii. \( \text{had} + V + \text{ed} \).

  e.g. had played.

The forms can be drilled using a few similar Verbs.

Table 23

Table Showing The Simple, The Continuous, and The Perfective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Simple</th>
<th>Continuous</th>
<th>Perfective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To reinforce the learning, exercises like the following can be given.

Write down the forms taken by the following Verbs in the manner shown above.

Write, love, fly, live and reach.

### 6.5.5.2. Uses of the Various Verb Forms

Once the form of the Verb is understood, the uses of the form should be mentioned.
6.5.5.2.1. The Simple form

This is used:

1. To express habitual action.
   - e.g. He drinks tea every morning.
2. To express general truths.
   - e.g. The sun rises in the East.
3. In narratives (dramatic present).
   - e.g. Sohrab now rushes forward and deals a heavy blow to Rustum.
4. To express activities in progress (as in a running commentary).
   - e.g. The bowler sends a fast ball.

6.5.5.2.2. The Continuous form is used:

1. To refer to actions in progress.
   - e.g. The girl is singing.

Two facts to be pointed out are the following:

i. the action will be of short duration

ii. the time of action is here and now.

   - e.g. He is dancing now.

Teaching Point

1. Malayalee Learners have the tendency to use the Continuous form always. This is a tendency that the Second Language Teacher should always look out for and correct.
2. Learners should also be warned about the use of Continuous form for the Verbs of Perception. It must be pointed out that, in involuntary Perception the ‘-ing’ form is not used.

The following usages are wrong:

a. "I am seeing a bird.

b. "I am hearing a sound.

c. "I am smelling good food.

d. "I am feeling cold.

e. "The ice-cream is tasting good.

f. "She is feeling sick.

The sentences should be:

a. I see a bird.

b. I hear a sound.

c. I smell good food.

d. I feel cold.

e. The ice-cream tastes good.

f. She feels sick.

Other Verbs not used in Continuous form are:

appear, seem, look , want, wish, desire, think, suppose, forget, know, understand and remember.

6.5.5.2.3. The Perfect Tense

The Perfect Tense is used:

1. to indicate completed activities in the immediate past.
e.g.
He has just gone out.
She has just finished her work

2. To express past actions for which time is not given.
   e.g.
   Have you read *Gulliver’s Travels*?
   Have you seen the film *Titanic*?

3. To indicate an action for which the result extends to
   the present.
   e.g. I have bought a car. (The car is still with me)

**Teaching Point**

The Malayalam inflection for this is ‘       ’. Where the Malayalam Verb has the inflection ‘     ’, the English Language needs the Perfective.

6.5.5.3. The Past Tense Form

This form is used for actions completed in the past.

6.5.5.3.1. The Simple Past is used for completed actions.

   e.g.
   i. I received his letter yesterday.
   ii. He defeated his opponents.
   iii. He always carried his Identity card.

6.5.5.3.2. The Past Continuous Tense denotes:

   1. An action that went on for sometime in the past.
e.g.
We were listening to the music all evening.

2. A habitual action in the past with words like always, continually etc.

   e.g.
   He was always grumbling.

**6.5.5.3.3.** The Past Perfect is used:

1. To describe an action completed before a certain moment in the past.

   e.g.
   I met him in Delhi, I had met him five years ago.

2. To indicate the earlier of the past actions.

   e.g.
   The train had left by the time I reached the station.

2. In Indirect Speech.

   e.g.
   The boy said that he had done his homework.

3. In Subordinate Clauses (Rejected condition)

   e.g.
   If he had worked hard, he could have passed.

**6.5.5.4. The Future Tense Form**

**6.5.5.4.1.** The Simple Future Tense

The points to be remembered are the following:
i. The Verb in this use does not show any change of form as seen in the Present and Past Tenses.

ii. The Verb retains the root form with ‘will’ or ‘shall’ preceding it.

The graphic representation of the form will be

Will / shall + V

e.g. 1. I will wait here.

2. You shall wait for me.

3. They will board the train from the next station.

4. We shall meet again tomorrow.

6.5.5.4.2. The Future Continuous Tense

The graphic representation of this form is

shall/will + be + V + ing.

e.g. 1. I shall be waiting for you.

2. He will be addressing the crowd this evening.

3. We will be reaching there by Monday morning.

6.5.5.4.3. The Future Perfect Tense

A graphic representation of this form is

shall / will + have + V.

This form tells that an action will be completed at a future date.

e.g. 1. He will have left his office by now.

2. She will have finished cooking by now.

3. Ram will have finished practicing by now.
The use of the correct Tense form can be studied only by means of working out exercises. It is possible to use the help of the L1 to get at the correct Tense form.

For the Simple Past – the inflection is ‘ ‘.

For the Continuous Tense– the inflection is ‘ ‘.

For the Perfect Tense – the inflection is ‘ ‘.

Exercise.

Use the correct Tense of the Verb in brackets:

1. The Earth --(move) round the Sun.
2. I shall telephone you when he -- (come) back.
3. It started to rain while we -- (play) tennis.
4. He thanked me for what I -- (do).

Each Table given below contains a brief summary of each of the different Tenses.

Table 24

The Present Tense

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. no</th>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>Structure Of the verb</th>
<th>Number of the Subject</th>
<th>Uses of the Tense</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>Simple Present</td>
<td>V + s</td>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>1.Habitual</td>
<td>1a.She drinks a cup of milk every morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>V</td>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>2.General truths</td>
<td>1b. They like ice-cream.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.Rasmi throws</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 25

#### The Past Tense

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S no</th>
<th>Verb form</th>
<th>Structure Of the verb</th>
<th>Number of the Subject</th>
<th>Uses of the Tense</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>Simple Past</td>
<td>V + ed</td>
<td>singular plural</td>
<td>1. Action completed</td>
<td>1. She left the class last year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Past habits</td>
<td>2. He always carried an umbrella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>be + V+ ing</td>
<td>singular</td>
<td>1. Action going on</td>
<td>1. He was reading,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 26
The Future Tense

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S no</th>
<th>Verb form</th>
<th>Structure Of the verb</th>
<th>Number of the Subject</th>
<th>Uses of the Tense</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>Simple Future</td>
<td>will / shall +V</td>
<td>singular plural</td>
<td>1. Action still to take place</td>
<td>1. I shall see him tomorrow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Future Continuous</td>
<td>will / shall</td>
<td>singular plural</td>
<td>1. Action going at sometime in</td>
<td>1. I shall be watching the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 6.5.5.5. Sequence of Tenses

The Sequence of Tenses has to be taught with great care.

**Teaching point**

The teacher should focus on the following facts:

1. The Tense in the Main Clause and the Tense in the Subordinate Clause should agree.

   - e.g. i. He says, he knows all about it.
   - ii. He said, he knew all about it.

2. Tense is shown by the Auxiliary.

Table 27

Table to show Sequence of Tenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Main Clause</th>
<th>Subordinate Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>He thinks</td>
<td>thinks-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Pres)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>He thought</td>
<td>thought-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>that she will cry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>will cry-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Pres)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>that she would cry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>would cry-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>He sees</td>
<td>(Past)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>He saw</td>
<td>(Past)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>She</td>
<td>(Pres)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>practises</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>She</td>
<td>(Past)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>practised</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>He has said</td>
<td>(Pres)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>He had said</td>
<td>(Past)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>He says</td>
<td>(Pres)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>He said</td>
<td>(Past)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table makes it clear that the Tense in the Main Clause and that in the Subordinate Clause agree with one another.

Exercise:

Construct five sentences based on each type given above using the following Verbs:

know, give, run, want and finish.

Use the correct form of the Verb in the following sentences:

1. The gamblers --(run), when they --(see) the police.
2. I --(enjoy)these books, when I --(is) at school.
3. If David --(work), he would have passed.

4. He --(thank) me for the help I -- him.

5. I -- (shock) to discover that all my money-- (steal).

6.5.6. Teaching Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a very vast area. To deal with the entire subject is beyond the scope of this paper. So this researcher proposes to deal with those specific areas which create a feeling of helplessness in the L₂ learners.

6.5.6.1. Errors in Spelling

a. The use of the single “L” or double “L” creates confusion in the learner

i. Words in which the prefix ends with a double “L”.

Here one “L” is dropped.

e.g.

All + most – Almost
All + right – Alright
Full + some – Fulsome
Full + fill – Fulfil

ii. Words ending with “full” drop the last “L”.

e.g.

Careful, colourful, faithful, merciful, spoonful, beautiful etc.
iii. Double “L” is used before a suffix beginning with a vowel.

   e.g.
   
   Cancel + ed - Cancelled
   Counsel + ed - Counselling
   Compel + ed - Compelled
   counsel + ing – Counselling
   Compel + ing – Compelling

iv. Single “L” is used before a suffix beginning with a consonant.

   e.g.
   
   Annul - Annulment
   Fulfil - Fulfilment
   Quarrel - Quarrelsome
   Install - Instalment

Exercises under Single “L” or Double “L”.

Identify the correct spellings:

1. i. faithful or faithfull
   ii. faithfully or faithfully
   iii. sackful or sackfull

2. i. till or til
   ii. until or until
   iii. fulfill or fulfil
3. i. skillfull or skilful
   ii. willfully or wilfully
   iii. shovelful or shovelful

b. The use of “ie” or “ei” also creates problems for learners of English.

The learner should be told that:

i. “i” comes before “e”
   except after “c”.

   e.g.
   Achieve
   Chief
   Diesel

ii. In those words where the letters “e” and “i” occur after the letter “c”, the spelling is “ei”.

   e.g.
   Eating
   Receive
   Deceive
   Receipt

Exercise under “ie” or “ei”:

Identify the wrong spellings:

1. receive
2. ceiling
3. deceit
4. diesel
5. piece
6. ancient

**Teaching point**

Teachers should point out the fact that certain words in English are alike except in the ending. In such words,

Nouns end in “-ce”. e.g. advice, device.

Verbs end in “-se”. e.g. advise, devise.

A few more such words are given below:

Licence (Noun), to license (verb)

Practice (Noun), to practise (verb)

Another problem ending is the choice between “-ance” and “-ence”.

**Teaching point**

a. Most words ending in “-ance” are related to words ending in “-ant”.

   e.g.

   Abundance (abundant)
   Attendance (attendant)
   Defiance (defiant)
   Distance (distant)
Reliance (reliant)

b. Most words ending in “-ence” are words related to “-ent”.

e.g.

Competence
Correspondence
Excellence
Omnipotence
impudence

6.5.6.2. Use of the Hyphen

There is a change in the use of Hyphens in Compound words.
The change is from separate words to hyphens and then from
hyphenated words to single words.
The best general rule is to use a hyphen if it is needed to make
the meaning clear and to avoid ambiguity.

Some rules are the following:

i. Noun and Noun Combination forming a Noun use a

    Hyphen.

    e.g.

    Baby-sitter
    Ball-pen
    Corner-stone
    Ding-dong
    Filter-paper
ii. Verb and Verb Combinations are hyphenated

  e.g.
  Crash-land
  Drip-dry
  Dry-clean
  Spin-dry
  Test-drive

iii. Verb and Adverb may be hyphenated when the combination forms a Noun.

  e.g.
  Break-out
  Clean-up
  Fly-past
  Take-off

iv. Adjective and Adjective are often hyphenated when the combination forms Adjectives.

  e.g.
  Anglo-French
  Audio-visual
  Cold-blooded
  Middle-aged
  Left-handed
Michael Swan in his book “Practical English Usage” says: “The situation at present is rather confused [...] If one is not sure whether to use a Hyphen between words or not, the best thing is to look in a Dictionary, or to write the words without a Hyphen”.

In preparing this paper, this investigator’s focus has been on the Errors committed by the Malayalee learners she has come across in her career as a teacher of English. It has been found that the errors made, seriously hampered communication and prevented correct usage of the Language. This paper is a sincere attempt to give ways to rectify those errors using easy-to-learn techniques, keeping in mind the need for the learning to become permanent.

It is this researcher’s earnest desire that her findings and the remedial techniques suggested will be of value to those teachers of English, who face similar problems.