

Combination of Methods of Teaching Grammar in Efl Classes

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Abstract

Teaching language effectively to serve the purpose of human communication involves considering various aspects such as linguistic theories, learner needs, and evolving methodologies. Over time, language teaching has evolved through different approaches and methods, each reflecting changes in our understanding of language and learning. This research can provide valuable insights into how students perceive and engage with grammar instruction, shedding light on their preferences, challenges, and learning outcomes. Understanding students' perspectives can help educators tailor their teaching methods to better meet the needs and preferences of learners, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of grammar instruction in EFL contexts

Key words: *Communicative Approach, grammar-focused methods, inductive.*

The role of grammar in language teaching has indeed been a topic of debate and evolution over time. Traditional language teaching methods often placed a heavy emphasis on grammar, focusing on form and accuracy in language learning. However, as language teaching philosophies evolved, there was a shift towards prioritizing communication skills and real-life language use over strict adherence to grammar rules. "it was even suggested that teaching grammar was not only unhelpful but might actually be detrimental" (Nassaji and Fotos 2004:126)

The Communicative Approach, which gained prominence in the 1970s and 1980s, marked a significant departure from traditional grammar-focused methods. This approach emphasized the

importance of using language for communication and meaningful interaction rather than just memorizing grammar rules. Learners were encouraged to engage in authentic conversations, role-plays, and tasks that required them to use language in context.

Keck and Kim (2014:30) point out that for many years now, researchers' focus has been on "how to draw students' attention to grammar while still developing other areas of communicative competence", but they have still not come to a conclusion about the ideal balance between these two. Nassaji and Fotos (2011:1) state that "The controversy has always been whether grammar should be taught explicitly through a formal presentation of grammatical rules or implicitly through natural exposure to meaningful language use"

First and foremost, the nature of the language being taught plays a significant role in determining the feasibility of an inductive approach to language learning. Inductive learning, which involves presenting specific examples and allowing learners to infer rules and patterns, can be more effective for languages with salient features, consistency, and simplicity of use and form.

For instance, when teaching comparative adjectives, as you mentioned, the inductive approach can work well because the patterns are relatively straightforward and the rules can be inferred from examples. Learners can easily identify the patterns and apply them to new situations.

On the other hand, teaching certain aspects of language, such as the use of articles (a/an, the), inductively might be more challenging due to the complexity and variability of their usage. The rules governing article usage in English are often nuanced and context-dependent, making it less conducive to an inductive approach.

Additionally, the metalinguistic tools available to learners also play a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of an inductive approach. Learners need to have the necessary cognitive and analytical skills to observe patterns, make generalizations, and apply them to new contexts. If learners lack these metalinguistic tools or if the linguistic feature is too complex, an inductive approach may not be as effective.

Therefore, when considering language instruction, educators should carefully assess the linguistic features being taught and the cognitive abilities of their learners to determine whether an inductive approach is suitable for a particular language concept.

Grammar can be described as a means of expressing certain types of meaning – notions and functions – through grammatical forms. The primary function of language is interaction and communication. However, in traditional approaches to grammar, rules and forms are the starting points for grammar teaching. Both communicative and cognitive approaches stress that meaning happens before form, that is speakers use forms to express what they mean.

There are some terms that must be recognized in relation to grammatical knowledge. A distinction is often made between declarative and procedural knowledge, and implicit and explicit knowledge. Anderson, according to Newby (2006), defines declarative knowledge as knowledge about facts and things, and procedural knowledge as knowledge about how to perform various cognitive activities. In language teaching this distinction is important because it reflects the distinction between competence and performance. Newby (2006, p. 99) says that this knowledge-based distinction "supports a rationale of specifying the aims of learning grammar in terms of performance, rather than mere competence".

Proponents of communicative language teaching argued that learners could develop their communicative competence more effectively by focusing on using language in real-life situations

rather than solely on mastering grammar rules. This shift in focus led to a more balanced approach to language teaching, where grammar was taught in context and as a means to facilitate communication rather than an end in itself.

While the importance of grammar in language learning is still recognized, modern language teaching approaches often aim to strike a balance between teaching grammar for accuracy and form, and promoting communicative competence. By integrating grammar instruction with opportunities for meaningful communication, educators can help learners develop both their linguistic accuracy and their ability to use language effectively in real-world contexts.

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