

**DIFFERENT WAYS OF TEACHING GRAMMAR**

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Abstract: Grammar instruction has long been seen as crucial to language proficiency development. As a result, this article offers a five-step grammar instruction strategy. This approach, which I developed, blends the ideas of practice and consciousness-raising with explicit and implicit knowledge, as well as deductive and inductive grammar teaching methods. My experience as a grammar teacher and my strong interest in creative grammar instruction led to the development of this approach. It is expected that the proposed measures will give English teachers another way to teach grammar, especially when it comes to teaching tenses and modals in college and university settings or even in elementary schools.

Key words: Understanding, inductive and deductive methods, English language, and instructional strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Grammar plays a crucial role in language learning, as a strong grasp of grammatical rules is essential for language development. This is particularly important in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL). In practice, grammar is taught through phrase patterns, which serve as fundamental language structures. According to Ur (1999), grammatical rules help learners understand and apply these patterns correctly. Therefore, grammar instruction should primarily focus on the accurate use of grammatical terms and sentence



structures. In other words, it should cover language structure, phrase patterns, meaning, and practical usage.

English grammar is notoriously difficult to master, both for native and non-native speakers, due to its many subtleties, complex rules, and numerous exceptions. Given these challenges, educators over time have adopted various strategies to teach grammar effectively and improve students' writing skills. Traditional methods that relied on memorization and repetition have gradually been replaced by more innovative approaches. As society values literacy and effective language learning, it continues to embrace new and improved techniques for teaching grammar.

MAIN PART

Diagramming sentence

Diagramming sentences is a traditional grammar-teaching method that originated in the 19th century. It involves visually representing the different parts of a sentence to illustrate their relationships. This technique, which is particularly beneficial for visual learners, largely disappeared from modern education about 30 years ago. Two common approaches to sentence diagramming are the Reed-Kellogg System and dependency grammar, both of which help in visualizing sentence structures.

Structuring sentences in a way that clearly demonstrates grammatical relationships between words is an essential aspect of language learning. In recent years, famous opening lines have been reprinted, and various online tools now allow users to visually map out sentence structures. Many educators argue that teaching grammar separately is not the most effective approach since students primarily need to understand how language functions as a whole. However, students often perform well when they are provided with specific grammatical rules to follow. Despite this, they still tend to make grammatical mistakes, sometimes even unnecessary ones, in both spoken and written communication. Integrating grammar rules into practical language use, such as speaking and writing, can be quite challenging.

For this reason, teachers—especially those instructing EFL students—may find it beneficial to explore alternative grammar teaching methods. These approaches can



help them integrate grammatical structures with other language skills, ultimately supporting students in achieving language proficiency.

Learning Grammar Through Writing

In the United States and Canada, schools frequently implement this method. Instead of focusing on memorization, students are encouraged to explore language through reading and creative writing, which naturally helps them develop grammatical accuracy. If a particular grammatical issue arises, it is addressed through a structured lesson. Research suggests that rote memorization is ineffective for grammar learning. Instead, when lessons are more interactive, students are better able to recognize and apply grammatical rules in their writing. Repeated practice, particularly through personal or creative writing exercises, plays a crucial role in reinforcing these concepts.

An article published by The Atlantic suggests that 21st-century educators should reconsider outdated grammar instruction methods in early education. Instead, they should adopt writing-based learning strategies to better equip students for effective writing in adulthood.

Inductive Teaching

The inductive approach to teaching grammar involves students recognizing how a grammatical concept works by analyzing a series of examples that illustrate it. Instead of receiving direct explanations of rules beforehand, students are encouraged to naturally grasp grammatical structures while reading and writing. Observing grammar in use and seeing its application in context helps learners remember concepts more effectively than simply hearing or reading theoretical explanations without examples. The main goal of this method is to ensure that students internalize grammatical structures. Teachers achieve this by using techniques that enhance cognitive processing and strengthen contextual memory.

Inductive reasoning progresses from specific observations, measurements, or facts to broader generalizations, such as rules, laws, or theories (Felder & Henriques, 1995). Induction refers to deriving a general principle from particular cases that have been observed. Many scholars argue that this approach can also be called rule-discovery learning in grammar education. In this method, teachers first present



examples of sentences before explaining grammatical rules. Through this process, students infer grammar rules from context rather than memorizing them outright. Grammar explanations may be provided either verbally or in written form. This technique actively engages students in their own learning, encouraging them to develop their own problem-solving strategies. Essentially, this approach highlights implicit grammar rules and motivates learners to deduce these rules from the teacher's examples and guidance.

Deductive Teaching

The deductive approach to grammar instruction follows a structured method in which rules are explained before students practice them. Teachers introduce a grammatical concept in detail before asking students to apply it in exercises and written work. This approach often relies on worksheets and repetitive practice. Although widely used, the deductive method has been criticized for being overly rigid and teacher-centered, which can make learning monotonous. Some educators believe that this approach discourages students from writing creatively due to its emphasis on rote learning.

Also known as rule-driven learning, the deductive method presents explicit grammar rules first, followed by exercises that reinforce them. This approach has traditionally been the foundation of grammar instruction and remains common in textbooks and self-study resources (Fortune, 1992). Despite its long-standing use, many educators today are reconsidering its effectiveness, particularly as more students struggle with reading and writing skills at the post-secondary level.

Interactive Teaching

Using interactive methods in the classroom is an effective strategy for teaching grammar. Gamifying grammar lessons engages students and helps reinforce their learning. This approach allows teachers to cater to different learning styles. For example, students could each receive a large flashcard with a word and then physically arrange themselves to form a correct sentence. Other interactive activities include word searches and fun online quizzes.



Various grammar teaching methods have been developed, refined, or combined over time, all with the shared goal of helping students communicate effectively and understand how to use the English language. Each approach has its strengths and weaknesses, as English grammar is complex. Some concepts require extensive explanation and practice, while others may be easier to grasp. Regardless of the teaching method, a strong command of English grammar is essential for improving students' literacy skills.

CONCLUSION

The primary goal of grammar instruction is to help students understand how language is structured so they can confidently use it in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. To achieve this, language teachers must employ innovative and engaging techniques. Most importantly, instructors should provide students with opportunities to practice grammar by creating sentences that are syntactically and semantically correct, using appropriate and meaningful vocabulary—regardless of the type of exercises used.

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