UNDERSTANDING INDUCTIVE AND DEDUCTIVE APPROACHES IN TEACHING GRAMMAR IN EFL CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

Giving instruction for a language class specifically a grammar class can be a problematic issue of controversy in EFL context for non native speaker (NNS) teacher due to the lack of approach or strategies implementation and the language problem faced in the teaching and learning process. The primary aim of this article is to provide some insight for teachers when conducting or giving instruction to the teaching of English grammar. It also highlights that in giving instruction, combining deductive and inductive approaches can be beneficial for teachers or faculties who are teaching English grammar in the setting of EFL context. Hence, they have to vary the strategies whether it should be extensive or intensive as suggested by Hinkel (2006) in which it might be one of the technique that can be put into account and applied in order to make the teaching of grammar more effective and efficient.

Keywords: EFL context, deductive and inductive approaches

ABSTRAK

Memberikan instruksi dalam kelas bahasa khususnya kelas tata bahasa dapat menjadi masalah yang kontroversi pada konteks English as a Foreign Language (EFL) untuk guru non native speaker (NNS) karena kurangnya penerapan terhadap pendekatan/startegi dan masalah bahasa yang dihadapi dalam proses belajar mengajar. Tujuan utama dari artikel ini adalah untuk memberikan beberapa masukan bagi guru ketika melakukan atau memberikan instruksi dalam pengajaran tata bahasa Inggris. Selain itu, artikel ini juga menyoroti bahwa dalam memberikan instruksi, menggabungkan strategi induktif dan deduktif dapat bermanfaat bagi guru atau instruktur bahasa yang mengajarkan tata bahasa Inggris dalam konteks EFL. Oleh karena itu, dalam hal mengajar, mereka harus bervariasi dalam menerapkan strategi pembelajaran apakah itu harus ekstensif atau intensif seperti yang disarankan oleh Hinkel (2006) di mana hal tersebut mungkin menjadi salah satu teknik yang dapat dipertimbangkan dan diterapkan untuk membuat pengajaran tata bahasa lebih efektif dan efisien.

Kata kunci: konteks EFL, guru non native speaker (NNS), strategi induktif dan deduktif

INTRODUCTION

Teaching grammar to the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learner has always been a main issue which is often discussed among the language teachers. In the context of EFL, the learners may undergo a number of problems such as the complicated rules of the language and the inappropriate implementation of strategies. It, therefore, may be the reason why the approaches to teaching grammar are debated.

Every language has unique rules or grammar. Thornbury (1999, p. 1) has defined that "Grammar is partly the study of what forms (or structures) are possible in a language. Thus, grammar is a description of the rules that govern how a language's sentences are formed" Harmer (1987, p. 1) also defines grammar by stating "The grammar of a language is what happens to words when they become plural or negative, or what word order is used when we make questions or join two clauses to make one sentence."

In the past time, the teaching of grammar was seen as the most prominent technique and it might have referred to the teaching of foreign language (cf. Rutherford, 1987) before it came to a more communicative one such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as the most recommended technique

to be used recently. Richards (2001) states that "Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a broad approach to teaching that resulted from focusing on communication as the organizing principle for teaching rather than a focus on mastery of the grammatical system of the language" (p. 36). On the other hand, there might be a number of problems emerge when a teacher or language instructor gives the instruction or conducts his teaching such as the problems of the students' language proficiency and the techniques or strategies used. Regarding the students' language proficiency, the teacher or language instructor should understand whether his students are beginner – having very low language ability, intermediate – having the knowledge of grammar better or advanced in which the comprehension of the students are mostly at high level. In so doing, the instruction given can be then successful. Concerning the techniques or strategies, the teacher or language instructor is supposed to not only build the learners' character but also to transfer the knowledge. However, when they teach English or give instruction to a subject, it may pose its own challenge for those who are not native speakers of English let alone for those who view English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Hence, they should understand a lot of techniques or strategies dealing with instructions when teaching language skills although giving instruction may simultaneously occur with the teaching itself. In addition, in transferring the knowledge, they have to vary the instruction or techniques such as repetition or drilling, role play, memorizing dialogues and etc in their teaching in order that the material being conveyed can be varied that may lead to the students' comprehension to be more understandable. Therefore, in order to succeed in his teaching, the teachers or language instructors must not only have the knowledge but also possess the ability to instruct his material (strategies) in such a way that the material being conveyed or taught can be comprehensively understood by the learners. He or she should vary the techniques or strategies during his teaching and give a clear instruction to it in any circumstance or situation the teacher may undergo. He should also make the teaching instruction to be more attractive and fun – thereby

successful teaching might be at his/her hand for overcoming difficult situation encountered. Such activity may also lead to effective teaching, in which Richards (2001) showed that to become effective teaching, there might be a number of aspects involving in the teaching such as: 1) Institution - the organization culture of a school refers to the ethos and environment that exist within a school. 2) Teachers – those who create a context for good teaching and determine the success of a program. 3) The Teaching process - the teaching practices that occur within a program that contains teaching model principles, maintaining good teaching, and evaluating teaching. 4) The learning process – goal that teachers have to be considered in the planning and delivery process. It contains understanding of the course, views of learning, learning styles, motivation, and support.

STRATEGIES IN LANGUAGE TEACHING APPROACH

There has been a shift in terms of what approach should be best utilized in conducting the language teaching specifically in grammar instruction. As Huang (2010, p. 29) points out that "grammar instruction has moved from its central position in traditional language teaching approaches to playing virtually no role in communicative approaches." Another scholar (see Ellis, 2006) also argued against the teaching of grammar. She states that such teaching might not only be based on the traditional approach but also focused on form approach. Despite the debate, Ellis (2006) has suggested a few forms of grammar teaching are essential for a communicative language teaching setting. Other scholars (see; Krashen, 1985; Hammon, 1988) also focused on form when grammar is taught. They implicitly proposed that the main aim of focus on form is concern with finding out whether this kinds of instruction that helped the learners to effectively acquired the structures they had been taught. This in line with what Morelli (2003, as citied in Al-Mekhlafi & Nagaratnam, 2011, p. 72) states that, "Grammar can be taught traditionally or contextually, but student perception should be considered by teachers in the decision-making process." Additionally, in the teaching of grammar, the

teacher can conduct it inductively or deductively. Ellis (2006, p. 84) points out that

> *Grammar teaching* involves any instructional technique that draws learners' attention to some specific grammatical form in such a way that it helps them either to understand it metalinguistically and/or process it in comprehension and/or production so that they can internalize it.

Krashen (1981 as citied in Ellis, 2006, p. 85) argued that

> grammar instruction played no role in acquisition, a view based on the conviction that learners (including classroom learners) would automatically proceed along their built-in syllabus as long as they had access to *comprehensible input* and were sufficiently motivated. Grammar instruction could contribute to learning but this was of limited value because communicative ability was dependent on *acquisition.*

There has also been pro and contra regarding the use of grammar. Horowitz (1990 as cited in Pazaver & Wang, 2009, p. 29) states that there might be a tendency that the mismatch frequently occur between students and teachers on the use of grammar resulting in negative effects. To tackle this problem, the teacher should be the scaffold or as the assistant who help the learners with their development of their language problem. Without any assistance or scaffolding from the teacher, learners may not succeed in their linguistics problem or when they are introduced with a new subject even though they may have good interaction or much input but they might fail because nobody will correct their mistakes when they produce incorrect utterances for they put their attention to much on meaning but pay less attention to the form. According to Pica (2000) that when the learners are concentrated too much on the meaning but less on forms of communicative teaching, there will be not adequate for learners to become more proficient in terms of native-like. Thus, the role of grammar in the class of CLT has to be well-explained. So, the role of a teacher as scaffold is essential to help the learners understand better either with the instruction as well as with their milieu.

APPROACHES TO TEACHING GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION

Al-Mekhlafi & Nagaratnam (2011) on their study of difficulties in teaching and learning grammar in an EFL context have proposed that there are three areas such as "grammar as rules" "grammar as form", and "grammar as resource" dealing with the teaching of grammar that need to be taken into account. They further state that for many L2 learners, learning grammar often means learning the rules of grammar and having an intellectual knowledge of grammar (p. 70). In accordance with the aforementioned discussion, it is apparent that there has been a change in the teaching of a classroom instruction which was focused on forms such as in the Grammar-Translation Method and Audio-lingual Method to functional language communicative contexts. This links to what Terrell (1991, p. 53) calls "explicit grammar instruction ... to mean that the use of instructional strategies to draw the students attention to or focus on form and/or structure." Hence, the aim of functional language communicative context is that the learners may no longer focus on the rules of structure (forms) but rather having the ability to communicate and having the capability of applying them in the use of their own use of the language (see Brown, 2006). Despite the criticism on focus on form, Long (1991) offered the learners to focus on meaning. Additionally, Hinkel on her study about teaching grammar on writing class has proposed some notions dealing with grammar instruction. She states that "Grammar instruction based on authentic or simplified discourse can provide fruitful opportunities for teaching tenses, clause structure, articles, and pre positions in context" (1997, p. 195). The instruction for teaching English grammar that may be offered here is that deductive and inductive approaches. The deductive approach may begin with the arrangement of rules or structures and then followed by examples in which rules are implemented. According to Hinkel (1997, p. 181) that "Grammar instruction in many English as a second language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms includes deductive teaching and learning, when the teacher presents grammar rules followed by various forms of practice." Conversely, the inductive approach firstly starts with

giving examples and then followed by the presentation of the rules or structures. Prince and Felder (2006, p. 124) indicated that "Inductive teaching and learning is an umbrella term that encompasses a range of instructional methods, including inquiry learning, problem-based learning, project-based learning, case-based teaching, discovery learning, and just-in-time teaching." Figure 1 simply illustrates such approach:
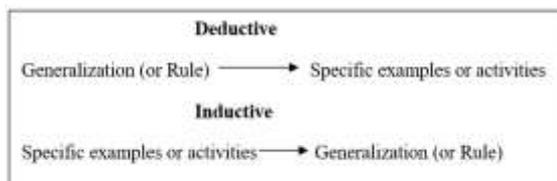

Figure 1. Deductive and Inductive Learning
adapted from http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/policy/approach/instrapp05.html

However, when implementing the deductive approach in the teaching of grammar instruction, it is merely focused on the teacher – teacher-centered. This old paradigm has shifted to a new approach that the current approach should concentrate on the student – student-centered learning. As stated earlier in the introduction section that to tackle this situation, the teacher can be a scaffold for their learners i.e. their assistance to overcome the difficult situation and their role to facilitate their learners' needs to determine which could be the best approach to be applied in their teaching.

DEDUCTIVE AND INDUCTIVE APPROACHES

In recent years, it is believed that the teaching of grammar have been largely altered from deductive to inductive approach. This happens because when the students are taught in a deductive approach, the students would pay less attention to the comprehension of the language but rather on the rules of the grammar. It is much more conventional since the role of the teacher is merely concentrating more on the rules in the beginning and continues with the examples at the end. Conversely, in inductive approach, the students tend to be more active as they were also introduced with grammar rules simultaneously. On the other hand, the aim of grammar teaching is to help the students find the rules themselves from the provided examples. Rutherford and Smith (1988) stated that

Although in teaching grammar both of the approaches are different, teachers preferred inductive teaching approach since the focus is more on students - student-centered.

Apart from its controversy on what is the best approach be applied in the teaching of grammar. The following idea is precisely taken and presents the advantages and disadvantages of deductive and inductive approaches as clearly described by Adamson (2009):

Advantages of a deductive approach:
- It gets straight to the point, and can therefore be time-saving. Many rules — especially rules of form — can be more simply and quickly explained than elicited from examples. This will allow more time for practice and application.
- It respects the intelligence and maturity of many - especially adult -students, and acknowledges the role of cognitive processes in language acquisition.
- It confirms many students' expectations about classroom learning, particularly for those learners who have an analytical learning style.
- It allows the teacher to deal with language points as they come up, rather than having to anticipate them and prepare for them in advance.

Disadvantages of a deductive approach:
- Starting the lesson with a grammar presentation may be off-putting for some students, especially younger ones. They may not have sufficient metalanguage (i.e. language used to talk about language such as grammar terminology). Or they may not be able to understand the concepts involved.
- Grammar explanation encourages a teacher-fronted, transmission-style classroom; teacher explanation is often at the expense of student involvement and interaction.
- Explanation is seldom as memorable as other forms of presentation, such as demonstration. Such an approach encourages the belief that learning a language is simply a case of knowing the rules.

Advantages of inductive approach:
- Rules learners discover for themselves are more likely to fit their existing mental structures than rules they have been presented with. This in turn will make the

rules more meaningful, memorable, and serviceable.

- The mental effort involved ensures a greater degree of cognitive depth which, again, ensures greater memorability.
- Students are more actively involved in the learning process, rather than being simply passive recipients: they are therefore likely to be more attentive and more motivated.
- It is an approach which favours pattern-recognition and problem-solving abilities which suggests that it is particularly suitable for learners who like this kind of challenge.
- If the problem-solving is done collaboratively, and in the target language, learners get the opportunity for extra language practice.
- Working things out for themselves prepares students for greater self-reliance and is therefore conducive to learner autonomy.

Disadvantages of an inductive approach include:
- The time and energy spent in working out rules may mislead students into believing that rules are the objective of language learning, rather than a means.
- The time taken to work out a rule may be at the expense of time spent in putting the rule to some sort of productive practice.
- Students may hypothesise the wrong rule, or their version of the rule may be either too broad or too narrow in its application: this is especially a danger where there is no overt testing of their hypotheses, either through practice examples, or by eliciting an explicit statement of the rule.
- It can place heavy demands on teachers in planning a lesson. They need to select and organise the data carefully so as to guide learners to an accurate formulation of the rule, while also ensuring the data is intelligible. However carefully organised the data is, many language areas such as aspect and modality resist easy rule formulation.
- An inductive approach frustrates students who, by dint of their personal learning style or their past learning experience (or both), would prefer simply to be told the rule.

To conclude, the teacher or the language instructor may make use of the above approach interchangeably so that the instruction can be effectively and efficiently done. In addition, among her research questions, Ellis (2006) has attempted to find out some techniques for grammar instructions. They include: 1) Should grammar instruction be massed or distributed

2) Should grammar instruction be intensive or extensive? She further states that when the grammar instruction be "massed or distributed", they should be taken into account and focused on whether or not the "available teaching time" have to be shorter or longer. Whereas when grammar instruction to be intensive or extensive, it should cover a single (many) grammatical structure in a single lesson (p. 84). In addition, in terms of intensive and extensive of grammar instruction, Spada & Lightbown (1999) show that even though the learners might not be ready to learn the patterns of the target language, intensive grammar may help them to utilize the structure they have been taught and obtained to be more accurate. Henceforth, in intensive grammar teaching, this might assist the learners to develop by the stages involving in the process of acquiring the structure.

CONCLUSION

There is a tendency to increase success in the teaching of learning deductively and inductively by selecting the right approach by considering the profile of students and teaching arrangements (see, Brown, 1987). Apart from which approaches should be applied in the teaching of grammar, the teacher should notice that whether his goal is to make the learners understand the rules of the language or to help the learners discover the rules themselves in which it is currently much preferred as well as more student-centered. Additionally, in order to succeed in teaching of grammar, well preparation is one of the activities that must also be done by the teacher before teaching without neglecting other elements of teaching strategies. In addition to implementing all the characteristics as mentioned previously, the teachers must be able to control the situation and atmosphere of the class as well as supposed to be able to combine the methods, or procedures when teaching in the context of English as a Foreign Language. Furthermore, as role models, teachers should both upgrade his hard skills and provide soft skills to build the character of students. Concerning the teaching of grammar instruction, it should be justified and integrated so that the EFL learners may not only focus on the meaning but also on forms or vice versa or even depending on their own personal

choice of learning style. It has been stated that it is highly recommended to teach grammar by combining of both deductive and inductive approach so that the students would pay more attention when both directed to grammar rules and meaning were taught at the same time (Mac Whinney, 1997 cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2003).

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