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DEDUCTIVE AND INDUCTIVE METHODS IN GRAMMAR TEACHING

The teaching of grammar is one of the key issues that has always dominated the field of second-language acquisition and foreign-language education. The importance of grammar in language classrooms and its degree of involvement in the teaching process has long been controversial among language experts and scholars. For some researchers, grammar becomes an integral element in the process of acquiring language competence and developing successful language skills. For others, the emphasis on grammar can actually interfere with the natural development of language competence and make learners less fluent and confident. Brown says that grammar has become an essential factor in developing communicative competence and linguistic accuracy [Brown 2007: 112.] At the same time, Richards and Rodgers say that regardless of changes in teaching methodology in history, grammar instruction has always occupied an important place in most of them [Richards 2001: 154]. Thus, a variety of techniques have emerged to enhance the effectiveness and relevance of grammar instruction. These approaches include the inductive and deductive methods of grammar teaching.

Historically, the approaches to grammar instruction have been greatly dependent on different methodologies. In the Grammar-Translation Method, grammar was taught through rule memorization and translations. Under the Direct Method and Audio-Lingual Method, the focus was on oral practice and habit forming, while under Communicative Language Teaching it was focused on meaningful communication between learners. According to Richards and Rodgers, the communicative approaches tried to find the balance between knowledge about grammar and language use [Richards 2001: 172]. The changes in methodologies led to changes in attitudes towards both deductive and inductive instruction in education. Modern educational systems attempt to combine grammatical accuracy and communicative competence.

The idea of inductive and deductive learning comes from philosophy, psychology, and cognitive sciences. Deductive reasoning means movement from general theories to specifics, while inductive reasoning implies movement from specifics to general statements. As Ellis explains, the former type of learning is related to explicit knowledge, while the latter is linked to language acquisition based on natural observations [Ellis 1994: 643]. Deductive learning is tightly connected with behaviorism and explicit instruction, implying transmission of

information from the teacher to the learner in an open-ended way. The focus is on repetition and practice.

However, the inductive method is related to constructivism theories and communicative approaches to language learning. According to Larsen-Freeman, it is easier for learners to comprehend grammar if they personally discover grammar patterns [Larsen-Freeman 2003: 74].

Modern theories of educational psychology point out that different individuals have different ways of perception and learning. For some learners, structured lessons are preferable, while other people need explorative lessons and activities to learn a foreign language better. Thornbury states that grammar lessons should take into account individual characteristics and preferences of the learners [Thornbury 1999: 31]. Also, modern theories of second language acquisition show that language learners benefit both from explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar. Thus, according to Krashen, comprehensible communication is necessary for language acquisition [Krashen 1982: 62].

The deductive methodology can be described as one of the most ancient and conventional ways of grammar instruction. In deductive grammar instruction, teachers initially teach grammatical rules in a clear and explicit manner by employing explanations, diagrams, tables, and examples. After grasping the rule, learners proceed to engage in exercise practice and controlled practice. According to Ur, the advantage of deductive grammar instruction lies in its ability to offer learners an immediate source of grammatical knowledge, allowing them to conduct themselves effectively during exercises [Ur 1988: 79]. For instance, in deductive grammar instruction of the present perfect tense, teachers may start by explaining the formation and use of the tense, followed by providing model sentences before undertaking practice through exercises.

One of the main advantages of deductive teaching is its efficiency. Teachers are able to provide comprehensive explanations of complicated grammar rules in an efficient way without losing class time. According to Nunan, deductive teaching is appropriate when there is a need to teach large volumes of content under pressure of time limitations [Nunan 1991: 166]. The deductive approach is especially relevant in situations where teachers are forced to conduct classes with many students or prepare students for exams, or simply require fast comprehension of grammar rules. It was found that learners can effectively use deductive teaching when they have to learn something very quickly, as they are able to use the rules they have just acquired. Another advantage of the deductive approach lies in its ability to minimize confusion of learners. Since rules are explicitly stated, students understand their obligations in a better way.

In addition, deductive methods provide teachers with an opportunity to retain control over the classroom and structure lessons properly. The application of

deductive methods is particularly suitable for complex topics like conditional sentences, passives, reported speech, and more complicated sentence structures. Still, there are some drawbacks of the deductive method. Students might become mere consumers of information without being actively involved in learning processes. According to Thornbury, "over-reliance on rule-based learning reduces motivation and interferes with communicative performance" [Thornbury 1999: 42]. Also, learners may have a theoretical knowledge of grammar but cannot effectively use this information in real-life situations.

Inductive grammar learning is a student-centered approach when learners discover the grammatical rule independently based on analysis of example sentences, text, dialogue, or communicative exercise. This means that learners discover rules on their own through observation of language structures without explicit instruction. According to Larsen-Freeman, inductive methods of grammar learning make students engage in the learning process and perform deep cognitive processing [Larsen-Freeman 2003: 88]. For example, students analyze several example sentences to try to figure out the rule on their own and then discuss their discoveries with other students and the teacher.

One of the key advantages of inductive teaching method is its ability to involve learners intellectually. Learners get engaged in the learning process by solving different kinds of tasks, analyzing language, and formulating hypotheses. Such engagement helps to acquire grammatical structures easier and remember them. Ellis states that learners tend to memorize grammar rules which they find out on their own through interaction [Ellis 1994: 657]. Moreover, inductive learning fosters communicative language teaching since grammar is usually presented in some sort of context rather than in isolation. In this way, learners become more autonomous and learn how to think critically about grammar. This approach makes learners motivated since it stimulates curiosity.

Another significant feature of inductive approach is learner autonomy that is promoted by this method. Learners become more self-regulated in the learning process and able to notice certain patterns of language usage independently. Fotos and Ellis stress that communicative grammar exercises increase knowledge of grammar structures and develop interaction abilities in learners [Fotos, 1991: 612]. In addition, inductive learning makes the classroom environment more interactive, as students collaborate, exchange thoughts, and take part in communicative practices.

However, there are disadvantages of inductive learning as well. For instance, it takes more class hours, and some students might feel puzzled and disappointed because they fail to detect grammar structures independently. Novices and learners with lower language skills might experience difficulties in drawing conclusions without proper assistance. According to Nunan, inductive learning should be

properly planned and conducted by the teacher to avoid any misunderstandings and dissatisfaction of learners [Nunan 1991: 174]. Besides, inappropriate examples and activities might cause incorrect generalizations of grammar application rules among learners. Many empirical studies comparing the efficiency of inductive and deductive instruction in teaching grammar were conducted.

Scientists tried to find out which method is more efficient in developing good grammar skills, communicative abilities, and retaining knowledge. A very interesting experiment with EFL students showed that deductive instruction was more efficient in short-term results, while inductive learning helped develop a better understanding and long-term memory of the material learned. According to Shaffer, both methods may be equally successful provided certain conditions. Shaffer [1989: 399]. Age, language proficiency, learning style, and cultural background also play a significant role in grammar instruction efficiency.

An analysis of the two approaches shows that there are advantages and disadvantages inherent in both. First, the deductive approach can be described as being teacher-oriented, rule-based, and effective when used to teach complicated grammar within a short period of time. Accuracy and practice are emphasized in the deductive approach. Second, the inductive approach is learner-oriented and discovery-based and is more appropriate when one wants to facilitate communication and independent learning among learners. In accordance with Ur, successful grammar teaching involves both accuracy-based and communication-based activities [Ur 1988: 95].

It is common for teachers to use both approaches in one class session. The teacher gives communicative examples to the students and asks them to find out the patterns through induction. Once students try to figure out the rules, the teacher gives an explanation on deduction. As Brown points out, effective language instruction usually demands that instructors be flexible and use several teaching techniques [Brown 2007: 128]. This combination of teaching methods is termed eclectic since it uses various methods of teaching depending on classroom requirements.

Technology has also had its impact on grammar education. Computer-based programs, educational software, interactive games, and online learning have made possible inductive and deductive instruction. The use of multimedia like video clips and animation as well as virtual classes can make grammar lessons interesting and appealing. Moreover, the grammar lessons of today focus on context learning. Instead of learning grammar in isolation, it is taught in the context of a conversation or a text. "Grammar can be seen as a dynamic tool for language use, not only as a system of rules to be learned" [Larsen-Freeman 2003: 91].

In conclusion, it is fair to say that both deductive and inductive methods are vital for grammar teaching. The main advantage of the deductive method lies in its

effectiveness in giving explanations, being accurate, and being more time-efficient. As for the inductive method, it helps promote learner autonomy, encourage better comprehension, and develop communicative skills. It should be stressed that according to the research conducted, there is no better or worse approach, but only the one which works in a particular situation and satisfies the needs of the learners. In other words, today's language learning advocates a combination of both methods.

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