การสังเคราะห์บทความวิจัยในวารสารออนไลน์เกี่ยวกับการพัฒนาไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษ

A SYNTHESIS OF ONLINE JOURNAL RESEARCH ARTICLES ON ENGLISH GRAMMAR DEVELOPMENT

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บทคัดย่อ

จุดประสงค์ของการศึกษาครั้งนี้ คือ เพื่อบ่งชี้วิธีการนำเสนอไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษที่ใช้โดยอาจารย์ชาวไทย ดังนั้น งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้จึงใช้บทความงานวิจัยที่เกี่ยวกับการพัฒนาไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษในประเทศไทยที่ตีพิมพ์แล้ว 49 บทความเป็น ตัวอย่างงานวิจัย งานวิจัยเหล่านี้ถูกรวบรวมจากแหล่งบทความออนไลน์ระหว่างปี พ.ศ. 2555 – 2558 ผลของงานวิจัยชิ้นนี้เผย ว่าบทความงานวิจัยที่เกี่ยวกับการพัฒนาไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษในประเทศไทยส่วนใหญ่นั้น มีจำนวน 45 จาก 49 บทความหรือ ร้อยละ 91.84 ใช้วิธีการสอนแบบนิรนัย เพื่อนำเสนอไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษ ขณะที่มีเพียง 1 บทความ จาก 49 บทความหรือ ร้อยละ 2.04 ที่ใช้วิธีการสอนแบบอุปนัย ยิ่งไปกว่านั้น 2 ใน 49 บทความหรือร้อยละ 4.08 ใช้วิธีการสอนแบบตรง สุดท้าย 1 ใน 49 บทความหรือร้อยละ 2.04 ใช้วิธีการสอนแบบฟัง – พูดในการสอนไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษ การใช้ไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษ อย่างถูกต้องจะทำให้มีการสื่อสารที่ถูกต้องจากผู้ส่งสารถึงผู้รับสารตามความตั้งใจของผู้ส่งสาร เนื้อหาหรือข้อความไม่ถูกบิดเบือน ซึ่งทำให้การสื่อสารไม่ล้มเหลวหรือป้องกันการเข้าใจผิด ความรู้เรื่องไวยากรณ์ยังช่วยพัฒนาทักษะการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษให้มี ประสิทธิภาพมากขึ้น ทั้งทักษะการฟัง พูด อ่านและเขียน อีกทั้งยังเป็นเครื่องมือที่ช่วยให้การสื่อสารประสบความสำเร็จอีกด้วย

คำสำคัญ: การพัฒนาไวยากรณ์ภาษาอังกฤษ วิธีการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ

ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were to identify approaches to English grammar presentation used by Thai teachers. Therefore, this study used 49 published research articles on English grammar development in Thailand as the research sample. The articles were collected solely from online journals published between years 2012

and 2015. The results revealed that the majority of the online research articles on English grammar development in Thailand, in other words, 45 of the 49 research articles or 91.84 percent, applied a deductive approach to presenting English grammar; while only 1 of the 49 research articles, or 2.04 percent, made use of the inductive approach. Moreover, 2 of the 49 research articles, or 4.08 percent, made use of the direct method. Lastly, 1 of the 49 research articles, or 2.04 percent, made use of the audio-lingual method in teaching English grammar. Mastering the English grammar enables accurate communication from the sender to the receiver, according to the sender's exact intentions. The content or the message will not be distorted, making communication fail-proof and preventing confusion. Grammar knowledge also helps to develop better English learning skills for listening, speaking, reading and writing aims. Thus, grammar is a tool that enables successful communication.

KEYWORDS: English grammar development, English teaching approach

Background and statement of the problem

English currently plays an important role in Thai education, being a compulsory subject at every level. Thai children generally start school with Grade 1 at the age of 7 and finish with Grade 6 at the age of 12. Some may start learning English at an earlier age, for example during pre-school. Graddol (2006) points out that the age at which children start learning English has been decreasing around the globe, as parents have come to believe that the sooner their children learn English, the easier they can acquire the language.

Sowden (2012) further added that communication not only includes strategy use and process; it also requires grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Additionally, a number of studies in Thailand have claimed that Thai students' persistent difficulties with using English for communication may be due to their lack of language content knowledge. They do not perform well in grammatical structures and vocabulary. To enhance students' ability to communicate in English, it is essential that communicative English grammar be brought into the process of English learning and teaching.

According to Pazaver & Wang (2009), grammar is considered tough and less attractive than other elements of language learning. While a common complaint is that students cannot remember grammar rules or use them correctly, having an awareness of grammar usage and being exposed to error correction of grammatical structures will enhance students' language acquisition and improve levels of accuracy in the target language. For these reasons, teachers must explore strategies to assist students in improving and developing appropriate uses of grammar.

This implies that in order to improve all English skills for Thai students and to improve their ability to communicate appropriately and effectively using clear and comprehensible messages, it is very important to know how Thai teachers teach English grammar in class.

Purposes of the Study

To identify approaches to English grammar presentation used by Thai teachers.

Research Questions

Which approaches do Thai teachers use to teach English grammar in the classroom?

Scope of the Study

This study focuses solely on research articles about English grammar development in Thailand published in online journals between 2012 and 2015. Research articles concerning the overseas context are not taken into account in this study.

Significance of the study

The most significant advantages of this study are as follows:

(1) For English teachers, this study is beneficial to teaching and learning, as the knowledge obtained through this research can assist in the teaching of English grammar. The aim is that teachers will adapt or create suitable activities for each student's level in preparation for ASEAN integrations.

(2) This study can be used as a guideline for designing English lessons and preparing teaching materials and activities.

Literature Review and Related Studies
Methodologies in Foreign Language Teaching

English language teaching methods have been subject to gradual change, especially throughout the twentieth century. for example, for which the teaching methodology has remained relatively unchanged.

Some may assume that teaching methods replaced another and that earlier ones became neglected, but this is not true. While methods do not normally cease to exist, they may become less prominent. For example, the Grammar-Translation Method has remained very suitable for self-study students who need a bilingual approach and who can cope with the terminology.

Approaches and procedures in Grammar Presentation.

All teachers agree that students are better writers when they have an understanding of grammar. To be effective writers and communicators later in life when in the workplace, students need to use proper grammar. What are the best methods for teaching grammar? Many teachers disagree on what types of grammar teaching methods are effective.

As defined by Thornbury (1999:1), "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."

In the past, grammar teaching was seen as the fundamental goal in foreign language classrooms. Students were taught to produce correct sentences both written and orally. Grammar was presented directly in textbooks so that the students obtained the rules of language first. This type of teaching approach is called deductive teaching and used mostly in the Grammar-Translation Method. However, grammar teaching approaches have changed from deductive to inductive, because when students are taught in a deductive approach their attention is directed at the grammar rules rather than understanding the language. In inductive teaching, learners are taught grammar rules as well, but the approach is not the same.

Among the methods for teaching grammar, the deductive and inductive methods have been most frequently discussed and used.

Deductive approach

A deductive approach is derived from the notion that deductive reasoning works from the general to the specific. In this case, rules, principles, concepts, or theories are presented first, and then their applications are treated. Thus, when we use deduction, we reason from general to specific principles.

Dealing with the teaching of grammar, the deductive approach can also be called rule-driven learning. In this approach, a grammar rule is clearly presented to students and followed by practice to test the application of the rule. This approach has been the basis of language teaching throughout the world and is still popular in many course books and self-study grammar books (Fortune, 1992). The deductive approach emphasizes that a teacher teaches grammar by presenting grammatical rules, and then examples of sentences are presented. Once learners understand the rules, they are told to apply the given rules to various example sentences. The presentation of the grammatical rules is only meant to direct students' attention to the problem being discussed. Eisenstein (1987) suggests that with the deductive approach, learners are in control during practice and have less fear of drawing an incorrect conclusion related to how the target language is functioning. In summary, the deductive approach starts with the presentation of the rule being taught and then is followed by examples to which the rule is applied. In this process, learners are expected to solve problems through studying and experimenting with the examples.

In cases where the deductive approach is applied, Michael Swan (cited in Thornbury, 1999, p. 32) outlines some guidelines for presenting grammar rules. Some examples of these guidelines are:

1. The rules should be true;
2. The rules should show clearly what the limits are on the use of a given form;
3. The rules ought to be simple;
4. The rules need to make use of concepts already familiar to the learners; and
5. The rules ought to be relevant.

Most importantly, when rules are presented using the deductive approach, the presentation should be given with examples, be concise, be sensitive to students' comprehension, and allow learners to have a chance to personalize the rule.

Inductive approach

The inductive approach comes from the concept of inductive reasoning, where the progression in reasoning starts from specifics (namely, observations, measurements, or data) to generalities (such as rules, laws, concepts, or theories) (Felder & Henriques, 1995). Thus, when we use induction, we observe a number of specific instances and from them infer a general principle or concept.

In the case of pedagogical grammar, most experts argue that the inductive approach can also be called rule-discovery learning. It observes that a teacher teach grammar starting with presenting some example sentences. In this case, learners understand grammatical rules from the examples. The presentation of grammatical rules can be spoken or written. Eisenstein (cited in Long & Richards, 1987) said that the inductive approach tries to utilize the very strong reward value of bringing order, clarity, and meaning to experiences. This approach involves learners' participating actively in their own instruction. Furthermore, the approach encourages a learner to develop their own mental set of strategies for dealing

with tasks. Consequently, this approach attempts to highlight grammatical rules by encouraging the learners to summarize the rules demonstrated by the teacher.

Considering the two approaches above, which one is better? This question relates to a long-standing debate among language teachers in the context of EFL/ESL, since the two have their unique strengths for a particular learner's progress. In one case, a study of various language learners showed that some learners achieved better language skills in deductive language classes, while others performed better in classes that are more inductive. This difference in cognitive styles may be associated with different neurological mechanisms in learners (Eisenstein, 1987).

Whether grammatical rules are taught inductively or deductively should also be determined based on the grammar structures being taught, since some are more suitable to a deductive approach, but others can be learned more easily using an inductive approach. To conclude, both deductive and inductive presentations can be successfully applied, depending on the cognitive style of the learner and the language structure being presented (Eisenstein, 1987; Brown, 2000).

Grammar Practice

It is universally accepted that practice is crucial in the teaching and learning of grammar. The following factors contribute to successful learning:

1. Pre-learning: Practice is more effective when new language is clearly understood and stored into short-term memory by the learners.

2. Volume and repetition: The more language the learners are exposed to or produce, the more they are able to learn. The learners should have enough time and opportunity to listen, speak, read, and write.

3. Success-orientation: Practice is most effective if it is based on successful methods.

4. Heterogeneity: Practice should be able to garner different sentences and create different levels of answers from each learner.

5. Teacher assistance: Practice is most effective when teacher assistance is freely given, such as through suggestions, hints, and directions.

6. Interest: Interest is a worthwhile feature of successful methods. Learners who lack motivation will find it difficult to concentrate, and their performance will suffer.

Grammar practice is usually divided into two categories, mechanical practice and meaningful practice.

Mechanical practice: Mechanical practice involves exercises that are aimed at structural accuracy. In doing mechanical practice, students must give their full attention to a key element of a structure. Substitution and transformation drills are generally used in mechanical practice.

Substitution drills: The students replace part of a structure with another word or phrase so that they get to know how that part functions in a sentence. Sometimes certain instructions are given. It is believed that substitution drills that require changes in form are more effective than those in which students replace the target part with another word.

Transformation drills: The students change a given structure so that they can compare with another, similar structure. This type of exercise also aids the students to have a better understanding of how the structures are formed and how they are used.

Meaningful practice: The aim is on the production, comprehension, or exchange of meaning, while the students' focus is on the way newly

learned structures are used in the process. Meaningful practice usually occurs after mechanical practice.

Using prompts for practice: This method has been proven as an effective way of practicing grammar. Instructions can be given through pictures, miming, tables, or key words. Practice based on instructions is usually meaningful practice.

1) Using picture instructions. The students are asked to create sentences based on the pictures given.

2) Using miming or gestures to give instructions. The directions guide students in asking questions, such as, "What were you doing at 7 o'clock yesterday evening?" or "What do you like to do in your spare time?" Instead of answering the questions directly, the teacher gives the answer by miming and then invites the students to guess the answers.

3) Using information sheets to give instructions. The students may produce language according to information provided in tables, such as the one below.

Students are instructed to describe each person using the information given and then add and tell other students about their own interests and hobbies. Another approach is having the teacher instruct the students to find information from each other first and then discussing it.

4) Using key phrases or key words as prompts. The students are asked to use the target language based on pictures and key phrases (words) given by the teacher.

5) Using chained phrases for storytelling. The students will tell a story based on the given instructions.

6) Using created situations. In classroom situations, it is very difficult to create a situation or purpose for genuine communication in English among the students. However, the teacher can develop a situation for the students to practice the language in a communicative way.

The understanding of how to teach grammar is even more debated than the actual value of grammar in language learning. Teaching grammar using the deductive and inductive methods have their advantages and disadvantages. The best practice is to survey and adapt to each situation.

Related studies of English grammar development

The majority of research on teaching English Grammar uses various activities to enhance students' understanding and evaluate their progress.

Wungnai (2003) compared the English grammar learning achievements of Mathayomsuksa 1 students (secondary school students) when using communicative activities and surveyed students' opinions toward studying English grammar using such activities. The students were taught English grammar for twenty class periods using a deductive approach and communicative activities. The results revealed that post-test English grammar achievement scores were significantly higher than those of the pre-test were, and the students had highly positive opinions toward studying English grammar.

Another study, conducted by Phatchara Munpanya (2014), was called, "Development of Communicative Grammar Lessons to Promote English Speaking Ability and Self-Confidence Among Tutorial School Students." The study concerned the development of communicative grammar lessons to promote the English speaking abilities of the tutorial school students and to compare the students' self-confidence before and after learning the lessons. The

results revealed that communicative grammar lessons based on communicative grammar activities were effective. The students' speaking abilities met the set criteria and were measured as fair, and after using communicative grammar lessons, the tutorial school students' self-confidence in using English increased and was also reported as fair.

Teaching by using grammatical patterns, assignments, and a variety of exercises, as well as visual media materials, enhances the students' understanding and effectiveness in developing their use of language structures. This will decrease students' boredom with learning grammar, encouraging them to learn.

Methodological Procedures

The methodological procedures employed in this study involved collecting research articles about English grammar development in Thailand published in online journals between 2012 and 2015. After that, the English grammar-development research articles were analyzed for approaches and procedures in grammar presentation, or according to the grammar translation teaching process. This is also sometimes described as the 3Ps method (Presentation, Practice, and Production). In the 3Ps method, grammar material is presented first. In this stage, grammar rules are understood and internalized by the learner. The second stage involved some practice activities, and in the third stage, learners are required to produce their own language (Skehan, 2003).

Sample Size and Scope

This study used 49 research articles about English grammar development in Thailand as a research sample. The articles were collected solely from online journals published between 2012 and 2015.

Data Collection and Data Ana lysis

A data analysis procedure was applied to assess Thai teachers' process in teaching English grammar. This teaching process divides grammar presentation procedures into two types, namely deductive and inductive. In the deductive approach, rules, principles, concepts, or theories are presented first, and then their various exercises are treated. In contrast, in the inductive approach, instead of explaining a given concept and following up with examples, the teacher presents students with many examples that show how the concept is used. The purpose is for students to notice how the concept is used and from that determine the grammar rule.

Results and Discussion

The online journal research articles that were collected focused on English grammar development for Thai students. The first step in data analysis concerned scrutiny of grammar presentation procedures according to the grammar translation teaching process, which defines three stages: Presentation, Practice, and Production.

In the presentation stage, the teacher introduces the form and use of a grammatical element. In the practice stage, the students practice the grammatical element using a variety of controlled and less controlled activities or exercises. In the production stage, the teacher sets up an activity that encourages students to use language freely and where they will produce the grammar previously studied and practiced.

Most online journal research articles on English grammar development in Thailand applied a deductive approach to presenting English grammar. Results revealed that 45 of the 49 research articles, or 91.84 percent, made use of this approach, while

only 1 of the 49 research articles, or 2.04 percent, made use of an inductive approach. Moreover, 2 of the 49 research articles, or 4.08 percent, made use of a direct method, and 1 of the 49 research articles, or 2.04 percent, made use of an audio-lingual method in teaching English grammar. The frequency of each grammar presentation procedure in online journal research articles can be seen in Figure 1:

Learning activity, Grammar games and communication activities. Teaching by using the grammatical patterns, assignments and variety of exercises as well as using visual media material will enhance the student's understanding and effectively develop language structure.
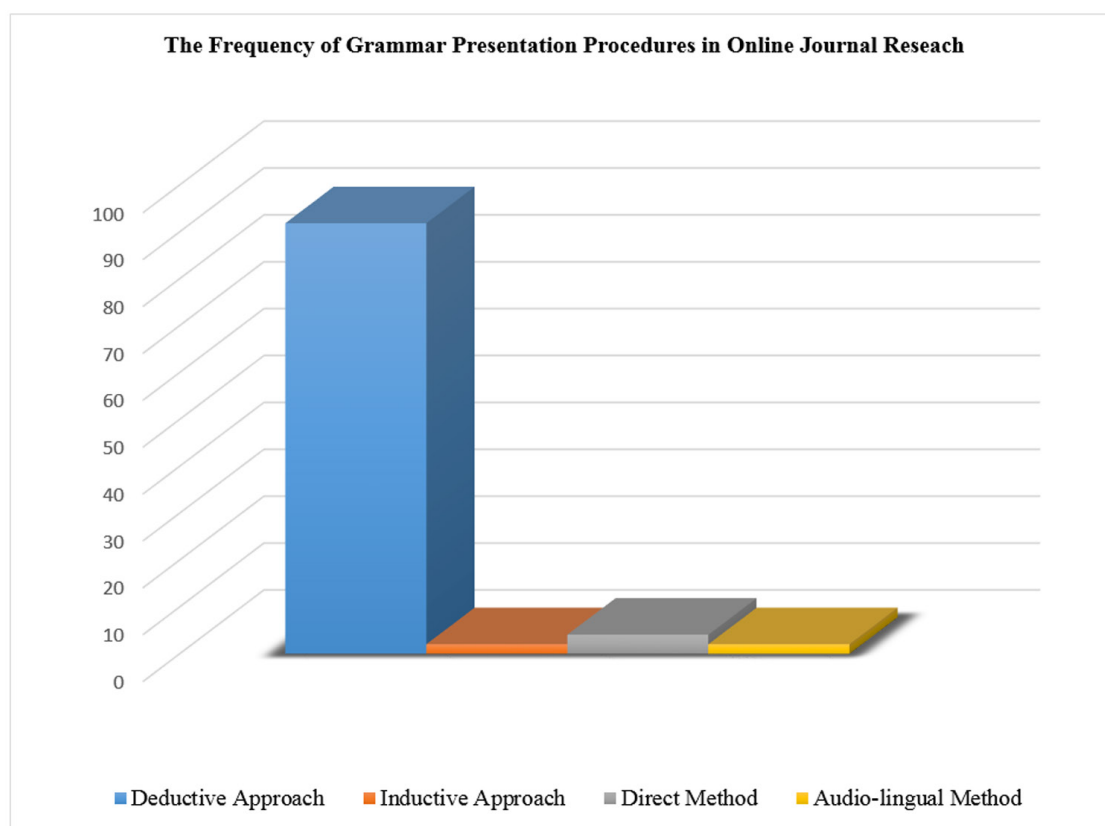

Figure 1: The Frequency of Grammar Presentation Procedures in Online Journal Research

A synthesis of the research articles revealed that there are various activities applied in the production stage depending on student's learning style. Frequent production activities were found in this research such as Mind-Mapping activity, Co-operative learning activity, Skills practice series, Peer-assisted

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