
Investigating the Role of Teaching Communicative Approach in Grammar

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Abstract

Since the introduction of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), many textbooks have been written to incorporate communicative activities, authentic materials and personalized contexts. However, where the teaching and learning of grammar is concerned, most textbooks do not reflect CLT principles. As demonstrated in this paper, grammar activities in some Sudanese textbooks retain the structural method of teaching grammar.

The study aims at investigating the role of teaching Communicative Method in grammar to fourth year students of college of education At the University of Alzaiem Alazhari. The study employed test research Method where the researcher used grammar such as English tenses, Prepositions and articles in the expermental group to help explainianing things when they were not clear.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching, grammar activities, Sudan

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) materialized in the West in the 1960s and has extended to the Eastern countries over the last 20 years. Since then, CLT principles have formed the foundation of English language syllabi for countries such as Malaysia and Taiwan. In Malaysia, CLT was adopted as early as the 1970s but in Taiwan, the switch from the structural to communicative approach only started in the 1990s. Before CLT was introduced, the structural

syllabus was the mainstream approach in most African settings including South Africa and Nigeria. Yalden (1987:61) summarized the essence of CLT thus:

It is based on the notion of the learners as communicators, naturally endowed with the ability to learn languages. It seeks to provide learners with the target language system. It is assumed that learners will have to prepare to use the target language (orally and in written form) in many predictable and unpredictable acts of communication which arise both in classroom interaction and in real-world situations, whether concurrent with language training or subsequent to it.

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In addition to these features, CLT also emphasizes learner-centeredness and the use of original materials. Howatt (1984) divided CLT into strong and weak versions. The strong version is in support of communicative features whereas the weak version suggests the integration of structural practice into the communicative elements.

This paper is of the view that both structural and communicative elements have a role to play in EFL and ESL especially in the Asian setting. This is due to two main reasons: First, the norms and practices of the structural syllabus have been embedded in the Asian cultures for decades. For instance, in a survey carried out by Maley (1986:104) on the Chinese of Mainland China, it was found that the Chinese view the teacher as the “textbook” or the guru that “has the knowledge.” Therefore, to learn is to convert knowledge in the textbooks to memory. This belief is adopted even in today’s Taiwanese society (despite some efforts to move toward CLT).

Second, communicative proficiency will become easier to achieve only when one has grasped the necessary knowledge of language (such as grammar). For societies whose first (and second) language is not English, there is still a need for structural practices so that the foundation of linguistic knowledge can be built up before further communicative tasks are given. Yalden (1987:94) suggests the

proportional approach in course designing. In this design, students learn more form than meaning at an early stage and as time increases (and as students' language proficiency improves), the intervention of communicative functions increases. At this later stage, the emphasis on form can be gradually reduced .

In order to examine whether the textbooks comply with either the structural or the communicative syllabus, the next section will take examples from the Malaysian and the Taiwanese textbooks. The reason for selecting these two countries is that both have strong practices of the audio-lingual syllabus in their language learning history. Despite this similarity, the more interesting question is how CLT is received in these two countries when their English positions differ (English is a second language in Malaysia but a foreign language in Taiwan) and when one English dialect is used instead of another (Malaysia uses British English while Taiwan uses American English). This paper compares grammar activities in the textbook in these two countries because grammar is the hardest component to teach with CLT approach.

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Comparison of Malaysian and Taiwanese English Textbooks

English language is the language of international communication, and it is widely used in Sudan as a foreign language. English language remains the most important language .There are a lot of people all over the world who have strong desire to learn and speak English language. In the Sudan there is a vast majority of people who are interested in English learning, particularly the students of English language at different Sudanese universities.

In order to understand English grammar very well, teachers of English should use communicative method to teach grammar implicitly in English language classrooms. one must be aware of using different activities such as group discussion or group work which is most effective technique in teaching grammar to EFL learners.

1.2 Statement of the problem:

Students at fourth level need to use English for their academic purpose and need it for their future career.

A pre and post - test a of English learners were used at Alzaiem Al azhari University College of Education at fourth year level indicates that learners cannot differentiate between past simple

and present simple tenses in grammar. Moreover, the study shows that students cannot use adjectives to compare things or describe people using adjectives. The study also has shown students of English have difficulty in using prepositions appropriately in sentences and putting sentences in order.

1.3 Objectives of the Study:

The aim of this study

- 1- The proposed research aims to:
- 2- to find out solutions of teaching communicative Method in grammar.
- 3- to Solve some difficulties that face teachers in teaching grammar through communicative approach.
- 4- to Highlight the useful techniques in implementing grammar through communicative Approach.
- 5- to Identify the difficulties and challenges that face teachers in teaching grammar through communicative approach.
- 6- to Trace the problems that face learners in learning grammar through communicative approach.

1.4 Significance of the Study:

The importance in this study is derived from the significance of English language itself. Learning a second language is a normal necessity for students so it concerns with the students of Alzaiem Alazhari University who have problems in learning grammar through communicative approach. In order to find out suitable solution for this problem gradually.

1.5 Hypothesis of the Study:

(1) Students of fourth year university level have problems in grammar in the following areas:-

- a) Tenses
- b) Prepositions
- c) Articles
- d) Sentence structure

(2) The reasons behind these problems are:

- a) Teachers teach grammar explicitly

b) Text books in general education doesn't focus on communication.

c) Lack of motivation.

(3) The communicative approach can solve the problem of learning grammar through application of communicative activities such as-:

a) Information gap activities.

b) Role play

c) Problem solving.

And through techniques such as.

(1) Pair works

(2) Group works

(3) Games

(4) Discussions

1.6 Questions of the research:

1. To what extent do students of fourth year university level have problems in grammar?

2. What are the reasons behind fluency for the university students?

3. How can communicative approach solve the problem of learning grammar?

1.7 Limitation:

The target groups of the study is the problems of investigating the role of teaching communicative method in grammar at fourth level students of Alzahiem Alazhari University College of Education fourth year 2015.

1.8 Methodology:

The researcher used a descriptive approach in this research.

The researcher followed a descriptive and analytic statistic method in this study.

Descriptive: The researcher attempts to describe the investigating the role of teaching communicative method in grammar such as students' test.

The population of the study is Khartoum State – Alzahiem Alazhari university students, for fourth year.

Subjects

The samples of this study are students of Alzahiem Alazhari university students, for fourth year..

Instruments

A test is used as instrument for gathering data.

Validity:

The test is slightly different, but is practical, not above the student abilities.

The test was checked up by expert who confirms that , it is valid and asked according to its compatibility to the student perception.

Reliability:

It is meant by the reliability of any test, to obtain the same results if the same, measurement is used more than one time under the same conditions. Also the reliability means when a certain test is applied on a number of individuals and the marks of every one were counted, then the same test applied another time on the same group and the same marks were obtained, then we can describe this test as reliable. Also reliability is defined as the degree of the accuracy of the data which the test measures.

Target group:

It is known that the tool of any study is the instrument which any researcher uses test for collecting the required data for the study.

2.1 Literature Review

Several works have been conducted on the influence of first language L1 in learning English language (Moosa) (1972) and , Swan smith, 2001, repeated that /P/ and /P/ each one is distinguished by native speaker.

In Arabic language, the situation is different, because there is only the phoneme /b/ so is the reason why most tertiary levels speakers mispronounce words with this sound Sudanese Student face the same problems.

Students confuse between /p/ e.g words like ("park" bark), (pen, bin) that is to say they pronounce /b/ instead of /p/ and sometimes /p/ is used in the place of /b/ this rarely happens.

Many other sounds are influenced by the mother tongue of foreign learners.

In near past (Brown, 200) found that a second language learner meets some difficulties, because his/her first language L1 affects his/her second language L2 specially in adult- hood .

Where L1 and L2 rules are in conflict, errors are expected to be committed by foreign learners.

So many learners use /p/ as /b/ other use /s/ for /θ/ and (7) for (ə) and (6) for (v) e.g. (face /faith) , (clothe/ close), (very, berry).

In addition to the post works (o, Conner) 2003,) Yule 2003 power 2003(have studied pronunciation problems and the of L1.

So many sounds such as /p/ and b , (s) and /θ/ , (z) and /ə/ts/ and S/ and /b/ are confused e.g (pit , bit), thin , sin) question / action) , leaser bather, (very, berry).

The mispronunciation of the results of over practice of the first language.

Process of fossilization the adult vocal musculature is the set to pronounce foreign sound with all accent Yule, o, Conner 2003) reported that the main problem of English pronunciation is to build a new set of sounds corresponding English, and to break down the arrangement of sound which the habits and the systems of our L1 have strongly built up.

The point mentioned above altogether share concept that learners confuse such sounds replace each of them- with other sounds that dare said to be nearest ones to them (o) connar 203) here are some examples of such replacement of sound /p/ (θ) force, fei) (faith, fei/ pass paes) (path poe6) (sink) , (think) /p/ and b/ v/ and /ff/ / cover/ knvar/ suffer/ safor/.

The problems and reasons according to the results of previous research it can be said that many of students mispronounce the above problems in the pronunciation of /p/, /6/ā/ts/v/originally the researcher assumed that some student above consonant because they aren't exist in their L1.

On the other hand these sounds are not in student spoken so the learner tend to pronounce the sound of their language get stiff from pronouncing particular sound of the L2 that why many speakers of other language mispronounce the sounds that to not exist in their L1 connar, 20

Data analysis

The table and figures show that the majority of respondents believe that the correct word Born spoken word Burn they have accounted for 96%, while the percentage of those who believe that the word Burn is correctly is only 4% and this confirms that the word is correct Born in pronunciation.

Table No (3) Examining the pronunciation of the vowel (ə) .

The table and figures show that the majority of respondents believe that is the correct word thin Born spoken word thing they have accounted for 100%, while the percentage of those who believe that the word Burm is correctly to 0% and this confirms that the word is correct thin in pronunciation.

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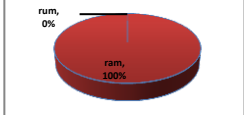
5) Examining the pronunciation of the vowel (ai) .

The table and figures show that the majority of respondents believe that is the correct word Vine spoken word thing they have accounted for 100%, while the percentage of those who believe that the word is wine correctly to 0% and this confirms that the word is correct Vine in pronunciation.

Table No (6) Examining the pronunciation of the vowel (ei) .


The table and figures show that the majority of respondents believe that is the correct word major spoken word thing they have accounted for 100%, while the percentage of those who believe that the word mayor is correctly to 0% and this confirms that the word is correct major in pronunciation.

Table No (7) Examining the pronunciation of the vowel (æ) .

Vowel	Word	Frequency	Percentage	Figure
ræm	rum	0	0%	
	ram	25	100%	
Total		25	100%	

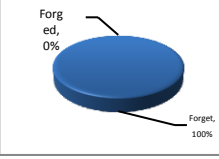
The table and figures show that the majority of respondents believe that is the correct word ram spoken word thing they have accounted for 100%, while the percentage of those who believe that the word is rum is correctly to 0% and this confirms that the word is correct ram in pronunciation.

Table No (8) Examining the pronunciation of the vowel (3:) .

Vowel	Word	Frequency	Percentage	Figure
w3:d	word	25	10%	
	worried	0	0%	
Total		25	100%	

The table and figures show that the majority of respondents believe that is the correct word “word” spoken word thing they have accounted for 100%, while the percentage of those who believe that the word is worried is correctly to 0% and this confirms that the word is correct word in pronunciation.

Table No (9) Examining the pronunciation of the vowel (ə) .

Vowel	Word	Frequency	Percentage	Figure
fəget	Forget	25	100%	
	Forged	0	0%	
Total		25	100%	

The table and figures show that the majority of respondents believe that is the correct word forget spoken word thing they have accounted for 100%, while the percentage of those who believe that the word is fired is correctly to 0% and this confirms that the word is correct froget in pronunciation.

Table No (10) Examining the pronunciation of the vowel (ai)

Phonetics	Word	Frequency	Percentage	Figure
ais	eyes	4	16%	
	ice	21	84%	
Total		25	100%	

The table and figure shows that the majority of respondents believe that is the correct word ice spoken word thing they have accounted for 84%, while the percentage of those who believe that the word is eyes is correctly to 16% and this confirms that the word is correct ice in pronunciation.

Table No (11) Examining the pronunciation of the vowel (u :)

Phonetics	Word	Frequency	Percentage	Figure
hu:z	whose	24	96%	
	house	1	4%	
Total		25	100%	

The table and figures show that the majority of respondents believe that is the correct word whose spoken word thing they have accounted for 96%, while the percentage of those who believe that the word is goues is correctly only 4% and this confirms that the word whose is correct pronunciation.

2.3 Conclusion

The examination of the selected textbooks has revealed that the implementation of CLT at Alzaiem Alzhari University settings has little influence on the teaching of grammar. This paper has suggested a number of communicative tasks to supplement the structural activities in the textbooks. Nevertheless, the methods discussed herein will only be effective when teachers are ready to incorporate CLT principles into their lessons.

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Appendix

Test

Investigating the Problems of Pronunciation for first year students of College of Languages Sudan University of Science and Technology

Dear student,

I would be very grateful if you could kindly respond to this test by drawing a circle round the correct sound .

Thank you very much for your cooperation and help .

Draw a circle round the correct sound

- | | | |
|--------|--------------|--------------|
| 1- ɔ: | (a) Burn | (b) Born |
| 2- eə | (a) harp | (b) hair |
| 3- i: | (a) fillings | (b) feelings |
| 4- ai | (a) vine | (b) wine |
| 5- ei | (a) major | (b) mayor |
| 6- æ | (a) rum | (b) ram |
| 7- ɜ: | (a) word | (b) worried |
| 8- ə | (a) forget | (b) forged |
| 9- a | (a) eyes | (b) ice |
| 10- u: | (a) whose | (b) house |