

APPLICATION OF A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH IN TEACHING ENGLISH GRAMMAR

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Abstract: This article explores the effectiveness of applying a contextual approach in teaching English grammar, aiming to foster a deeper understanding and practical application of grammatical concepts among language learners. Traditional methods often focus on rote memorization of rules, leading to surface-level comprehension and limited proficiency in real-world communication. In contrast, a contextual approach integrates grammar instruction within meaningful contexts, such as authentic texts, communicative tasks, and cultural contexts. By immersing learners in relevant situations where grammar naturally occurs, this approach enhances their ability to grasp grammatical structures, functions, and usage patterns. Furthermore, it promotes the development of essential language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, in an integrated manner. Drawing upon current research and pedagogical practices, this article provides theoretical insights and practical strategies for implementing a contextual approach in English grammar instruction. It emphasizes the importance of creating engaging and culturally relevant learning environments that facilitate active participation, critical thinking, and language acquisition. Additionally, it discusses the role of technology and multimedia resources in supplementing contextual grammar teaching, offering innovative ways to enhance learner engagement and autonomy. Ultimately, this article advocates for a paradigm shift in English grammar pedagogy, from isolated rule-based instruction to holistic, context-driven approaches that empower learners to use language effectively in diverse communicative settings.

Key words: contextual approach, language teaching, inductive method, deductive method, authentic materials, communication, grammar.

In the realm of language education, the teaching of English grammar has long been a subject of debate and experimentation. Traditional methods often rely on memorization of rules and isolated exercises, leaving learners disconnected from the practical application of grammar in real-world communication. However, a paradigm shift is underway, with educators increasingly recognizing the effectiveness of a contextual approach in enhancing grammar instruction. By integrating grammatical concepts within meaningful contexts, educators can empower learners to not only understand but also use English grammar proficiently in various communicative settings.

Contextual teaching in English grammar instruction involves embedding grammar lessons within authentic contexts, such as narratives, dialogues, and real-life situations. Rather than presenting grammar as a set of abstract rules, this approach emphasizes the relevance and application of grammar in everyday language use. For example, teaching the present perfect tense can be contextualized within a travel narrative, where learners describe their past experiences and adventures.

Traditionally, there are two main methods when explaining grammatical material:

1. The deductive method consists in the fact that the teacher gives new material, explains the basic rules, after which students perform a series of exercises: from the general to the specific, from the rule to action.
2. The inductive method is designed for independent derivation of grammatical rules based on a number of examples given by the teacher: from the individual to the general [1,33].

The deductive method of teaching grammar emphasizes giving instructions before practicing. The teacher explains the grammatical concept in detail to the students. After being introduced to the concepts, students should practice mechanically using worksheets and exercises. Deductive teaching methods are primarily teacher-centered and tend to ignore the specific language needs of the learner.

Within the framework of the deductive approach, teaching new grammatical material can be divided into three main stages:

- explanation of new material: the teacher writes down examples with new grammatical constructions, explains cases of their use, writes down examples of the formation of interrogative and negative constructions, examples of short answers, etc.;
- practice: students perform simple exercises, which are immediately checked by the whole group. At this stage, feedback and control on the part of the teacher over the correct assimilation of new material is especially important;
- productive exercises: include tasks such as composing dialogues, discussing various topics, finding similarities and differences in illustrations, composing stories (for example, for the Present Continuous topic - compose a story based on the picture "In the park") [2,104].

The inductive method of teaching grammar involves introducing several examples that give students an idea of a particular concept and from which students can observe how that concept works. The concept is not pre-developed and students will inductively learn the rules of grammar as they read and write. In this way, the teacher helps students learn more naturally by discovering grammar and visualizing how those rules work. The advantage of the inductive method is that students remember more than they could through memorization because learning is more natural. The inductive approach can be called a process in which students independently formulate grammatical rules by studying examples. In an inductive approach, it is also possible to use context for grammatical rules. In other words, students learn grammar rules in text or audio rather than in individual sentences.

The inductive method is a natural process, reminiscent of the process of mastering one's native language. In this process, the grammatical rule is not given in finished form. On the contrary, students make certain conclusions about the grammatical realities of a language based on contextual examples, understanding their grammatical structure using hypotheses, their confirmation or refutation, and, as a result, understanding grammatical rules at a functionally significant level.

For example, if the structure to be covered is a comparative form, the teacher will begin the lesson by drawing a figure on the board and saying, "That's Sanzhar. He's tall." Then the teacher draws another, taller figure next to the first one, with the words: "This is Sultan. He is taller than Sanzhar." [3,59].

The teacher then gave many examples, using students and objects from the class, famous people, or something from ordinary everyday life to create an understanding of the use of the structure. Students follow the teacher after each example, and ultimately practice the structures meaningfully in groups or pairs.

In this approach, the role of the teacher is to create meaningful contexts that support the demonstration of the rule, while students develop the rules through examples of their use in future practice.

The application of a contextual approach offers numerous benefits to language learners. Firstly, it promotes deeper comprehension by providing learners with meaningful contexts to anchor their understanding of grammatical concepts. Instead of memorizing rules in isolation, learners engage with language in authentic ways, facilitating retention and application. Moreover, contextual teaching fosters communicative competence by equipping learners with the skills to express themselves effectively in various situations. By immersing learners in real-life scenarios, educators cultivate language proficiency that extends beyond grammar rules to include vocabulary, pragmatics, and cultural nuances [4,82].

Effective implementation of contextual teaching requires thoughtful planning and integration of instructional strategies. Educators can incorporate authentic materials such as newspapers, podcasts, and videos to expose learners to diverse language contexts. Additionally, task-based activities, role-plays, and project-based learning provide opportunities for meaningful language practice within authentic settings. Technology-enhanced resources, such as online simulations and interactive multimedia, further enrich the learning experience by offering immersive and engaging environments for language exploration.

While contextual teaching holds promise for enhancing English grammar instruction, educators may encounter challenges in its implementation. Adapting materials to suit learners' proficiency levels and cultural backgrounds requires careful consideration. Furthermore, balancing the need for grammatical accuracy with the promotion of fluency and creativity can be a delicate task. Educators must also remain mindful of learners' individual learning styles and preferences, adapting instruction to cater to diverse needs [5,10].

In conclusion, the application of a contextual approach in teaching English grammar represents a transformative shift in language education. By integrating grammar instruction within meaningful contexts, educators can empower learners to develop not only grammatical competence but also communicative proficiency. Through authentic engagement with language, learners acquire the skills and confidence to navigate real-world communication effectively. As educators continue to explore innovative pedagogical approaches, contextual teaching stands as a beacon of change, revolutionizing the landscape of English grammar instruction for generations to come.

References

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