

## IMPROVING GRAMMATICAL ACCURACY IN YOUNG EFL LEARNERS

*Abdullaeva Gulkhayo Ulugbekovna*

*Uzbekistan State World Languages University*

[gulhayo.abdullayeva.28@gmail.com](mailto:gulhayo.abdullayeva.28@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** This article highlights the importance of enhancing grammatical accuracy of the English language in young language learners. It also examines the difficulties which young English language learners encounter while learning English grammar and the ways to develop their accuracy.

**Key words:** grammar, grammatical accuracy, inductive approach, deductive approach, direct method.

### INTRODUCTION

The fact that English is a global language and widely used for communicational and educational purposes around the globe demonstrates how important it is to learn the language. Thus, learners are recommended to commence the learning process at an early age. However, there are a number of factors hindering young learners of English from acquiring the language efficiently. Having a deep knowledge in phonetics, vocabulary and, in particular, grammar of a particular language is crucially important in order that a learner speaks a foreign language accurately.

When referring to grammar, the study of rules about word order and how words are connected to each other to make meaningful sentences is understood. To be able to build conversation with others, at least basic knowledge of English grammar is needed. According to Debata (2013), “Grammar is the study of words and the ways words work together, an invisible force that guides us as we put words into sentences. Any person who attempts to communicate using a language, consciously or unconsciously becomes aware of the grammar of that language” (p.483). Additionally, Canale & Swain (1980) proposed “Grammatical competence is considered to be an integral part of communicative competence. The knowledge of grammar is critical for having a good communication in the target language” (p.187).

According to constructivists (Vygotsky, 1967; Bruner, 1986), children learn grammar through interactions with more knowledgeable adults which is known as social constructivism and was suggested by Vygotsky (1967).

### LITERATURE REVIEW

It is obvious that children find it difficult to stay focused on a particular task for a long time due to their short attention span, especially teaching grammar rules appears to be challenging task for English language teachers. Because children do not have an

understanding of abstract concepts and theories while adults are more able to handle abstract rules and concepts. Therefore, effective teaching methods should be applied to draw their attention and encourage them to learn grammar with great interest.

Naturally, in the turn of the century, new approaches, methods and techniques appeared, making the process of teaching more effective and interesting, whereas in the 20th century Grammar Translation Method (GTM) was dominant where much attention was paid to the study of grammar and important language skills including speaking, writing and listening were ignored. Thus, GTM lost its importance in present-day pedagogy and it has been overtaken by various interactive methods.

As mentioned above, grammar is considered to be vital element of any language since it plays a crucial role in delivering speech to others. English teachers should at first work on learners' grammatical competence so that young learners will not form a habit of misusing grammar rules later on.

There has been much research on SLA on the importance of grammar in teaching English to young learners and the ways how to increase their knowledge of grammar. Lenneberg (1967) states that "Young learners often achieve better results in acquiring a second language and it becomes challenging for individuals past a certain period to reach ultimate attainment" (p.500) and this is known as Critical Period Hypothesis. However, some scholars argue that adults are better than children in some areas of SLA. Herschensohn (2007) notes that "Older learners will make use of their first language learning strategies to learn the grammar and achieve better performance than young learners". (p.2165). This does not necessarily mean children cannot reach ultimate attainment in grammar as long as the method, approaches and techniques suit their abilities and interests.

It was stated by Brown (2000) that "teaching grammar inductively is more appropriate than deductively in most teaching contexts since it is more in keeping with natural language acquisition where rules are absorbed subconsciously with little or no conscious focus. Besides, it conforms more easily to the concept of Interlanguage development in which learner's progress, on variable timetables, through stages of rule acquisition and it creates an opportunity for students to get a communicative "feel" for some aspect of language before possibly being overwhelmed by grammatical explanations" (p.17).

### **METHODOLOGY**

According to the previous researches, it is widely accepted that while teaching learners their age, needs and abilities should be taken into account. Specifically, age plays the leading role in the teaching process and young learners have aptitude for inductive learning. Harmer (2011) states "teachers of young learners are required to allocate time to understand the way their students think and operate" (p.22). Many researches into teaching grammar have decided that English teachers ought to teach

grammar to the young inductively rather than deductively where rules are explained explicitly and then they are put into practice. In order to define the term induction-deduction, Long (1988) suggested the term ‘focus on forms’ which means using the traditional teaching techniques and methods. GTM can be a bright example for this method where students are taught deductively.

However, there are arguments on which approach is highly appropriate in teaching children. Some researchers support deductive teaching and admittedly, this approach has become dominant in some countries. ”In such an approach, a grammar rule is explicitly presented to learners and followed by the practice of rules. This is known as PPP – present, practice and produce and common type of focus on forms. This approach has been the bread and butter of language teaching around the globe and still enjoys a monopoly in many course books and self-study grammar books” (Fortune, 1992, p.126). “... the inductive approach involves presenting examples that makes a clarification to a specific rule and expecting learners to notice the way in which the rule works from these examples. This approach allows for easier and longer retention of the rule rather than if the learners are given an explanation that is disconnected from examples of the rule” (Macfadyen, 2015,p.280).

In order to assist young learners in developing grammatical accuracy, an Inductive approach can be used which means great importance is attached to giving examples at first and then discovering rules independently. Thornbury (1999) states “An inductive approach (rule-discovery) commences with some examples from which a rule is inferred”. Jon Hird (2015) notes “Inductive reasoning is more of a bottom-up approach, moving from the more specific to the more general, in which we make specific observations, identify patterns, formulate hypothesis and reach a conclusion”(p.227).

Deductive: general → specific

Inductive: specific →general

Direct method can be successfully applied to teach grammar to young learners. Brown ( 1994) points out “The basic premise of the Direct Method was similar to that of Gouin's Series Method, namely, that second language acquisition should be more like first language learning- plenty of oral interaction, spontaneous use of the language, no translation between L1 and L2 , limited or no analysis of grammatical rules” (p.21). As mentioned earlier, children are more likely to absorb grammar rules readily while interacting with people who are more knowledgeable than them (Social constructivism).Thus, it is more advantageous to teach young learners through interactions in target language without translation and explicit teaching of rules.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, it was discovered that when children are in the process of learning a second language and attempt to communicate in the target language, they create a linguistic system known as Interlanguage. In this case, they make grammar errors which are not static but dynamic. Hence, these errors may be corrected through receiving instruction in the English grammar. According to the researches, 95% non-native speakers of English have a tendency to make errors and find it difficult to achieve proficiency. However, these errors, in most cases, are not fossilized and can be avoided by further practicing. Especially, Critical Period Hypothesis suggests that the younger learners are, the better results they have, because their brain has not developed too much and has not lost its plasticity, as a consequence of which, children are able to correct their errors.

Additionally, children have a preference for Inductive teaching of grammar rather than Deductive teaching since they find it dull and difficult to concentrate on. When they are taught rules implicitly with the help of audiovisual materials, it will benefit teachers greatly.

## **REFERENCES**

1. Benitez-Correa,C., Gonsales-Torres,P., Ochoa-Cueva,C., Vargas, A.(2019).A comparison between Deductive and Inductive teaching EFL grammar to high school students. *International Journal of Instruction*, 225-236.
2. Brown ,H.D.(2001). *A methodological history of language teaching*,21
3. Debata,K.P.( 2013).The importance of grammar in English language teaching: A reassessment.483.
4. DeKeyser,R,M.2000. *The robustness of critical period effects in second language acquisition*. Cambridge University Press, 500.
5. Mohammad, M.O.& Moh'd,A.A.(2020). The effect of inductive and deductive teaching on EFL Undergraduates' achievement in grammar at the Hashemite university of Jordan.*International journal of Higher education*.volume 9, 280.
6. Ruyun,H. (2016). The age factor in second language learning.*Theory and practice in language studies*.volume 6, 2165.