

Cognitive Approaches to Grammar Teaching: An Article Review

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Abstract

The cognitive approaches to grammar teaching, which is predicated on the notion that grammar is entwined with all other cognitive processes and structures, is clarified by means of an extensive literature survey conducted in this article. Reviewing the scholarly literature on the cognitive approaches and its connection to grammar was the study's main goal. Ten publications were classified as a result of the search being done in accordance with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) standards. The study's findings demonstrated that encouraging students to learn grammar via cognitive approaches make them more conscious of grammatical elements. Additionally, a number of factors, such as their opinions, attention, practice, and awareness, must be taken into account. A number of recurrent themes were also found in the literature review, including the importance of grammar to students and the efficacy of grammar education. Ultimately, it was discovered that while the cognitive approach presented certain difficulties in the context of teaching languages, it also demonstrated that pupils could readily identify the rules and conventions of grammar.

Keywords: *cognitive approach, grammar, language teaching, mental constructions*

Introduction

Since it is in line with the idea that learning a language involves more than merely internalizing and knowing rules, the cognitive method is essential for helping students improve their grammatical abilities. But, instead of being a distinct and self-contained cognitive system, grammar is not only an integral part of cognition but also a key to understanding it (Langacker, 2008).

Language structure emerges by abstraction from usage events, embracing all dimensions of how expressions are understood by interlocutors in the social, cultural, and discourse context (de Knop & de Rycker, 2008). By engaging learners in activities that stimulate their cognitive abilities, such as problem-solving exercises and critical thinking tasks, the cognitive approach aims to foster a deeper comprehension of grammar rules and their application (Kaleta, 2008). Students who actively participate in the learning process develop a deeper and more enduring comprehension of grammar, which improves their ability to communicate effectively in everyday situations.

To put it simply, the cognitive approach gives students the mental tools they need to understand grammar more thoroughly and practically, which improves their language ability.

as a whole. If generative linguistics views syntax as being central to language, cognitive linguistics accords this honor to meaning (de Knop & de Rycker, 2008). This technique attempts to provide implicit or explicit language teaching on features and patterns deemed significant to the learner by connecting grammar to mental processes and structures in human cognition. Grammar allows us to construct and symbolize the more elaborate meanings of complex expressions like phrases, clauses, and sentences (Janjić, 2022).

Method

Search Strategy

Mendeley was the database used for this study's search. The Mendeley database was the first resource used in the search, and then Research Gate was added. Researchers all across the world have wide access to both of them. The search strategy encompassed a range of keyword variations such as ("cognitive approach in teaching grammar" AND "cognitive approach for EFL grammar learning" AND "grammar learning using cognitive approach" AND "cognitive grammar" AND "communicative-cognitive grammar" AND "grammar teaching method" AND "grammar pedagogy"). The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) standards were used in this investigation (Page et al., 2021). Additionally, review reports that evaluate randomized trials are given a lot of weight by PRISMA, which forms the basis for reporting systematic reviews in a variety of research fields (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, 2009).

Exclusion Criteria

The exclusion criteria used were as follows: (1) Articles that were not published in journals indexed in Sinta and Web of Science, (2) Articles in languages other than English, (3) Articles published other than the last 5 years, namely 2019-2023. (4) Articles that did not explicitly mention the cognitive and grammar as the focus of the study.

Procedure

There were just ten articles left after applying the exclusion criteria. Because the articles didn't discuss the cognitive approach, grammar, or cognitive grammar, the majority of the items were thrown out. After being taken out of the original source, each article was examined using Mendeley software to get rid of any duplicates.

Results

One article featured a description and discussion of each of the five categories (including Author and Year) shown in Table 1. In terms of research techniques and types, content, research objectives, and research results, ten article manuscripts were assessed for this study.

Table 1. Articles selected for this study

Author and Year	Research Methods and Types	Content	Research Objectives	Research Results
(Hoffmann, 2020)	Descriptive study	Emphasizing the importance of creativity as an evolutionary adaptation that allows humans	To explore the topic of verbal creativity and its relationship with	It clearly stated that domain-general cognitive processes such as

Author and Year	Research Methods and Types	Content	Research Objectives	Research Results
		to think original thoughts, find solutions to new problems, and fundamentally change the way we live. • Discussing the interdisciplinary perspective of cognitive literary studies and psychology in understanding verbal creativity	constructionist approaches to language.	analogical thinking and schematization is important in entrenching schematic constructions, which enable speakers to creatively express new concepts
(Hurytová, 2022)	Descriptive case study.	Exploring the role of grammar instruction in the development of communication skills, functional approach and the position of grammar in language education.	To investigate the subjective theories of Czech language teachers regarding the communication functional approach and the position of grammar in language education.	• Examine the alignment between the teachers' subjective theories and their teaching practice. • Contribute to understanding the factors influencing the predominance of grammatical-normative and formal-cognitive approaches in language education, despite the emphasis on communication goals. • Highlight the significant influence of teachers' subjective theories (beliefs) on their teaching decisions and practices.
(Oktavyana, Sulistyaningrum, & Dewanti, 2019)	A qualitative design	Analyzing the model of Project-Based and Cognitive competencies-infused learning in the grammar class of English Language Education Study Program. The study employs a qualitative design and uses online class observation and grammar class syllabus documents as data sources.	• To analyze the used model of Project-Based and Cognitive competencies-infused learning in the grammar class of English Language Education Study Program. • To fill the gap in prior research and provide insights into the effectiveness and implementation of this model in the context of grammar teaching.	The Use of Project-Based and Cognitive competencies-infused into the existing models of learning in grammar classes of English Language Education Study Program is considered effective.
(Akhmarianti, 2021)	Descriptive study.	• Exploring the cognitive psychological factors involved in pedagogical grammar instruction, specifically consciousness as noticing, monitoring, and control, to enhance learners' metalinguistic awareness in acquiring specific grammatical tenses in narrative texts. • Highlighting the advantages of CRGT, such as allowing learners to understand language properties through examples and construct their own sentences in context. • The research contributes to the ongoing exploration of CRGT's effectiveness in	To investigate the effectiveness of Consciousness Raising Grammar Teaching (CRGT) in enhancing learners' metalinguistic awareness in second language acquisition.	Consciousness Raising Grammar Teaching (CRGT) is effective for teaching grammatical items in ELT classrooms and empowers learners' metalinguistic awareness.

Author and Year	Research Methods and Types	Content	Research Objectives	Research Results
		comparison to traditional grammar teaching approaches, with previous studies indicating its superiority.		
(Asenwa Mungai Candidate, 2019)	A descriptive study	Discuss the issue of hate speech in Kenya, particularly during election periods, and how language can be used as a tool for peace-building and national coherence. It applies principles of Cognitive Grammar to analyze hate speech and understand its meaning.	- To analyze hate speech in Kenya, particularly during election periods, using the principles of Cognitive Grammar to understand its meaning and effects. - To explore the conceptualization, categorization, and construal of hate speech in different cognitive environments, and to understand the perspectives of speakers in different linguistic and cultural contexts	It's important to understand the impact of hate speech and the need for deterrent measures to address it.
(Setoodeh, Jadidi, & Rassaei, 2020)	Quantitative research design.	- Exploring the cognition and beliefs of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers in Iran regarding grammar teaching. - Discussing the influence of teachers' beliefs on their teaching practices, the challenges in grammar teaching, and the discrepancies between teachers' and students' perspectives on error correction and grammatical terminology. - Delves into the factors that contribute to the development of teachers' belief systems and their influence on teaching practices. - Highlights the importance of understanding teachers' beliefs in shaping their classroom practices. - Emphasizing the significance of understanding teachers' beliefs in shaping their classroom practices.	- To explore the cognition and beliefs of EFL teachers in Iran regarding grammar teaching. - To understand the influence of teachers' beliefs on their teaching practices, the challenges in grammar teaching, and the discrepancies between teachers' and students' perspectives on error correction and grammatical terminology.	The research emphasizes the significance of understanding teachers' beliefs in shaping their classroom practices.
(Isroilova, 2019)	Descriptive analysis.	Discussing the occurrence and development of the communicative method of teaching foreign languages, driven by the modern pragmatic society's view of language as communication. Highlights two main problems associated with the communicative method. Firstly, the modeling of real dialogue situations within the confines of classroom lessons is insufficient for the formation of communicative competence in students. Secondly, the role of grammar in the communicative	To explore the occurrence and development of the communicative method in language training, considering it as a way to approach language learning as communication.	It concludes that the communicative-cognitive approach to teaching foreign languages is influenced by the modern perspective of language as communication.

Author and Year	Research Methods and Types	Content	Research Objectives	Research Results
		method is discussed, emphasizing the need to consider individual psychological features of students.		
(Wijnands, Rijt, & Coppen, 2021)	Qualitative analysis	It proposes a pedagogical template that combines cognitive learning and reflective development, aiming to teach students how to consult language resources and develop higher-order cognitive thinking skills. The template emphasizes analyzing language from different perspectives and mentions stages of development, including the pre-reflective and quasi-reflective stages	To address the limitations of traditional grammar teaching by focusing on real-life grammatical issues and developing a reflective attitude towards language	The research result focuses on the development of a pedagogical template that integrates cognitive and reflective thinking in L1 grammar education, aiming to enhance students' higher-order thinking skills and their ability to deal with real-life language issues.
(Canan, 2022)	Descriptive case study	It discusses the contributions of cognitive theory to the problem of automatization of grammatical structures in teaching foreign languages.	To investigate the role of explicit grammar teaching in promoting automatization.	The research results confirm the effectiveness of explicit teaching of grammar rules in language learning and the importance of practice and attention in the process.
(Trninić, 2023)	Experimental research	The research investigates the potential advantages of applying insights from cognitive linguistics to teaching prepositions in business English, compared to a traditional linguistic framework. The study focuses on three English prepositions: to, for, and at.	To determine whether a strategic incorporation of a cognitive view of language structure into the foreign language classroom can facilitate better understanding, more effective learning, and long-term retention of the language points taught.	The experimental group, which received a cognitive treatment of prepositions, outperformed the control group at all levels of statistical analysis, indicating the advantage of the cognitive approach. The average gain for the experimental group was higher than the control group, both in the immediate post-test (6.07 vs. 3.36) and the delayed posttest (4.26 vs. 0.47).

Discussion

Several resources are available to explore the cognitive approach to teaching grammar. Based on the provided articles, begin by reviewing the article "Construction grammar and creativity: Evolution, psychology, and cognitive science" available on Mendeley which likely provides the interdisciplinary perspective of cognitive literary studies and psychology in understanding verbal creativity.

Delve into the article "Czech Teachers' Subjective Theories about Teaching Grammar" on Mendeley which discusses about the subjective theories of Czech language teachers regarding grammar instruction and the communication-functional approach in language education.

Additionally, the article "Model of Project-Based and Cognitive Competencies-infused Learning in the Grammar Class of ELESP" from Mendeley which provides insights into the effectiveness and implementation of this model in the context of grammar teaching.

Another article titled “Consciousness raising-based grammar teaching: Empowering learner’s metalinguistic awareness in second language acquisition” which provides insight about the cognitive psychological factors involved in pedagogical grammar instruction, specifically consciousness as noticing, monitoring, and control, to enhance learners’ metalinguistic awareness in acquiring specific grammatical tenses.

The article titled “Language and hate speech: A cognitive grammar approach” which describes principles of Cognitive Grammar to analyze hate speech and understand its meaning.

the article titled “An In-Depth Exploration of EFL Teachers’ Grammar Teaching Cognition” which talks about the cognition and beliefs of EFL teachers in Iran regarding grammar teaching.

Another article titled “Communicative-Cognitive Approach to Teaching Foreign Languages” discusses the occurrence and development of the communicative-cognitive approach to teaching foreign languages, driven by the modern pragmatic society's view of language as communication.

Article titled “Learning to think about language step by step: a pedagogical template for the development of cognitive and reflective thinking skills in L1 grammar education” proposes a pedagogical template that combines cognitive learning and reflective development, aiming to teach students how to consult language resources and develop higher-order cognitive thinking skills.

Another one with titled “Contributions of cognitive theory to the problem of automatization of grammatical structures in teaching foreign language” discusses the contributions of cognitive theory to the problem of automatization of grammatical structures in teaching foreign languages.

Lastly, “Applying cognitive approach to teaching prepositions in business English: a case study” provides investigation to the potential advantages of applying insights from cognitive linguistics to teaching prepositions in business English, compared to a traditional linguistic framework.

Conclusion

A survey of the literature on the cognitive approach to teaching grammar leads one to the conclusion that the cognitive approach supports the importance of learner intelligence in language instruction and is founded on students' cognitive rules. Though it is a mental phenomenon, conceptualization is grounded in physical reality: it consists in activity of the brain, which functions as an integral part of the body, which functions as an integral part of the world (Langacker, 2008). It highlights how crucial it is to comprehend and apply the laws of language management as well as how to utilize language creatively. These phenomena exemplify the diverse array of mental constructions that help us deal with—and in large measure constitute—the world we live in and talk about (Langacker, 2008). It resides in conceptualizing activity, whereby we engage the world at many levels: physical, mental, social, cultural, emotional, and imaginative (de Knop & de Rycker, 2008). It is however helpful to realize that grammar subserves meaning rather than being an end in itself (de Knop & de Rycker, 2008).

The cognitive approach places a strong emphasis on students' internalization of rules, creative language use, and grasp of grammar. The contemporary cognitive teaching requires that language teaching should not be a mere listing of definitions and rules, but that it should stimulate the pupils to be creative and actively think, thus creating an individual who thinks about and analyzes what is learned, and takes a critical attitude and builds his/her own opinion (Janjić, 2022). Linguistic meanings are also grounded in social interaction, being negotiated by interlocutors based on mutual assessment of their knowledge, thoughts, and intentions (Langacker, 2008). It can promote critical thinking and make it simple for kids to understand grammar rules and regulations. Through a thorough examination of these varied sources, the author can acquire a thorough comprehension of the cognitive approach to grammar instruction, encompassing its theoretical underpinnings, pragmatic implementations, and possible influence on language acquisition.

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