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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# INVESTIGATING PROBLEM ENCOUNTER TECHNIQUE IN USING APPROPRIATE METHOD AND TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING GRAMMAR

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### ABSTRACT

This paper aims to investigate problem encounter teachers in using appropriate method and technique in teaching grammar. The researcher has adopted the quantitative method as well as the questionnaire as a tool for collecting data relevant to the study. To bring to the light the importance of method and technique in teaching grammar. The sample of this study comprises of (100) English language teachers in the Sudan who do not know how to use appropriate methods and techniques for teaching grammar. The result of analysis is that Teachers do not know how to use appropriate methods and techniques for teaching grammar.

### INTRODUCTION

Grammar (G) has been neglected in the field of second language teaching but for different reasons. Widdowson (1985:8) defines "language teaching as being a social and often in situational activity, brings theories of language and language learning (TLL) into contact with practical constraints." Allen and Corder (1975:45) state

*"Since the end of the Second World War language teaching theory has tended to emphasize the rapid development of automatic speech habits, and the need of discourse students from thinking consciously about underlying grammatical rules Advocates of oral method, the audio-lingual method and the multi-skill method in more extreme forms have assumed that language learning is and inductive rather than a deductive process and that the most effective of teaching is to provide plenty of oral and practice, so that students learn to use the language spontaneously without need for overt grammatical analysis".*

The experience of a large number of teachers over many years suggests that a combination of inductive and deductive methods produce the best result. Language learning is not simply a mechanic process of habit formation but a process which involve the active co-operation of the learner as rational individual. Most teachers will continue to see language

learning as fundamentally an inductive process based on the presentation of data, but one which can be controlled by explanation of suitable type. An important question concerns with the nature of the grammatical explanations given to the students and the type of linguistic grammar from which these explanations should be drawn. Thus we see the teaching of grammar not as an end in itself, but a useful aid in helping a student to achieve the practical mastery of a language. (ibid)

### Aims and Scope of the Study

This study aims to investigate the development of teachers' awareness of the importance of grammar. The scope of the study is limited to English language teachers in the Sudan. There are (132) English language teachers at secondary schools in Umbada Locality.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

No doubt, active teaching is a student-centered approach(SCA) to teaching. It includes any technique that involves the students in the learning process and holds students responsible for their own learning (Bonwell&Eison, 1991; Michel, et al, 2009; Yoder &Hochevar, 2005). Instructors may have a vast arsenal of active teaching techniques at their disposal, perhaps without even being aware of them (e.g. asking questions as part of one's normal lecture style). Instructors have used elaborate

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demonstrations, structured activities, journaling, small group discussions, quizzes, interactive lecture cues, videos, humorous stories, taking field trips, and games, to get students involved and active in the learning process (Bonwell&Eison, 1991; Cook & Hazelwood, 2002; Ebert-May, Brewer, & Allred, 1997; Hackathorn, *et al.*, 2010; Michel *et al.*, 2009; Peck, *et al.*, 2006; Sarason&Banbury, 2004).

While the literature on teaching effectiveness is vast, a large portion of the literature has been focused on the effectiveness, or perceived effectiveness, of interactive teaching strategies. These strategies can range from appropriate use of media and electronic resources (Serva & Fuller, 2004) to homework assignments (Bolin, Khrantsova, & Saarnio, 2005) and quizzes (Crone, 2001) to demonstrations (Zaitsev, 2010) and group projects (Kreiner, 2009). For example, Hackathorn and colleagues (2010) used interactive lecture cues, such as prompting students to link the material to personal stories, and found that it was an effective way of increasing students' depth of learning. Forrest (2005) took her students on a field trip to a hockey game, allowing them to see psychological principles, such as conformity and in-group bias, firsthand. Other instructors have created inclass games based on television game shows like "Jeopardy" (Binek-Rivera & Mathews, 2004) and "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" (Cook & Hazelwood, 2002; Saranson&Banbury, 2004) to increase student involvement and enthusiasm in the classroom.

From an innovation point of view, active teaching techniques change the pace of the classroom, and are a creative way to increase students' involvement, motivation, excitement, attention, and perceived helpfulness and applicability of the class (Binek-Rivera & Mathews, 2004; Bonwell&Eison, 1991; Guthrie & Cox, 2001; Stewart-Wingfield& Black, 2005). From a cognitive perspective, experientially taught students may engage in higher-order thinking such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill & Krathwohl, 1956; Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Hackathorn, *et al.*, 2010). They are also better able to identify the concepts in the real world, manipulate phenomena for their own purposes, think about the material in new and complex ways, comprehend phenomena conceptually, and recall, retain, and memorize the material better (Donovan, Bransford, & Pellegrino, 1999; Driscoll, 2002; Rubin & Hebert, 1998; Serva & Fuller, 2004; Whetten & Clark, 1996).

Although it seems that active teaching strategies should be adopted in every classroom, the literature is still mixed on its effectiveness (see Michel, *et al.*, 2009 for a review). This may be because the majority of the early research studying the effectiveness of teaching techniques are either qualitative in nature (Berger, 2002), anecdotal (Forrest, 2009), used satisfaction or course evaluations (Serva & Fuller, 2004), or used student completed, self-report measures of perceived learning (Benek-Rivera & Matthews, 2004) instead of actual cognitive outcomes. While it is important to understand how the students perceive and appreciate active teaching, a cognitive outcome offers a concrete evaluation of the degree to which students have learned a given concept (Tomcho&Foels, 2008).

Bloom's cognitive processing taxonomy is a valid, reliable, efficient, and effective means of evaluating learning (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Bloom, *et al.*, 1956; Lord & Baviskar, 2007; Noble, 2004). Specifically, the first three levels of Bloom's taxonomy (knowledge, comprehension, and application) can be used to effectively assess cognitive outcomes, because each level assesses learning at a different depth. The most basic level (i.e. knowledge) mostly assesses the students' abilities to remember material through questions that prompt students to identify, list, or describe a concept. Second level (i.e. comprehension) items prompt students to reword information in a meaningful manner to show that they understand the material. Third level (i.e. application) items instruct students to apply the material to new phenomena or constructs, which demonstrates their ability to select appropriate information from situations (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Bloom *et al.*, 1956; Granello, 2001; Lord & Baviskar, 2007). In the past decade, a large number of studies have begun to empirically examine the cognitive effects of active teaching techniques on learning outcomes (e.g. Benek-Rivera & Matthews, 2004; Cook & Hazelwood, 2002; Ebert-May *et al.*, 1997; Sarason&Banbury, 2004; Seipel&Tunnell, 1995; Strow&Strow, 2006; Tomcho&Foels, 2008). However, the results are mixed and often contradictory (see Michel, *et al.*, 2009 for a review). For example, some empirical studies demonstrate that active teaching techniques are superior to lecture (Serva & Fuller, 2004; Michel, *et al.*, 2009; Van Eynde & Spencer, 1988), while others suggest that there is no real difference (Dorestani, 2005; Miner, Das, & Gale, 1984; Stewart-Wingfield & Black, 2005). Thus, further research is warranted.

Perhaps one reason for such mixed results is that many of the empirical studies treat one class of students as an active teaching class ("active") and compare it to another class of students that emphasizes lectures ("passive"), with the two courses commonly being taught by two separate instructors (Michel, *et al.*, 2009). While overall, this provides evidence either in favor of or against active teaching, it confounds the comparison of the effectiveness of the technique itself. For example, Michel and colleagues (2009) found students in the "active" course were better at learning and memorizing course material than students in the "passive" course. However, because the class and instructors were different, a direct comparison of active teaching and traditional lecture is difficult. The differences may be due to the teaching techniques, the students who self-selected the course or the instructor, the instructor, or some other difference between the groups. Additionally, the authors used a large variety of techniques, without clear operational definitions of where one technique ends and another begins. Michel and colleagues (2009) described their 'active' class as containing quizzes, critical thinking exercises, demonstrations, discussions, and in-class activities. However, it is unclear which particular technique was the most effective, or whether one technique accounted for the difference in the learning outcomes. In another example, Stewart, Myers, and Culley (2010) examined the effectiveness of active teaching through a specific technique of in-class writing assignments.

**METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

The researcher uses sample for this study from Sudanese teacher of English from various schools who responded to questionnaire. A sample of 100 teachers was randomly selected for the questionnaire.

**Tools of the Study**

The researcher used questionnaire as a tool to collect the information of the study. The questionnaire which was given to the Sudanese English teachers whom were selected randomly.

The researcher used the descriptive analytical and quantitative methods as well as a questionnaire as a tool in the collection of relevant data and information in pursuing this study. Population of this study is drawn exclusively from English language teachers in the Sudan. There are (132) English language teachers at secondary schools in Umbada Locality. A sample of 100 teachers was randomly selected for the questionnaire.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The researcher used the questionnaire as a tool in the collection of data relevant to this study. The researcher has designed a questionnaire to identify the problems encountered by Teachers who do not know how to use appropriate methods and techniques for teaching grammar so as to come up with solutions to solve problems that encountered them. The tables below are going to illustrate what has been stated earlier.

**Teachers' Questionnaire Table (1)**

This item tries to elicit information from the teachers concerning their views about the effect of bad teaching on achieving the objectives of teaching grammar(TG).

**Table 1** Effect of bad teaching on achievement of objective of teaching grammar

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	88	88.0	88.0
	Neutral	9	9.0	97.0
	Disagree	3	3.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0

Table (1) above shows that a vast majority of the respondents (88%) agree that bad teaching has a bad effect on achieving the objectives of teaching grammar. Only 3% do not agree to that. This indicates that the teachers are aware of the negative consequences of bad teaching on the students level of grammar.

**Table (2)**

The effect of high teaching load on teaching grammar.

**Table 2** Effect of work load on teaching

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	68	68.0	68.0
	Neutral	22	22.0	90.0
	Disagree	10	10.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0

Table (2) above shows that a vast majority of the respondents (68%) agree that bad teaching has a bad effect on achieving the objectives of teaching grammar. Only 10% do not agree to that.

This indicates that the effect of high teaching load on teaching grammar.

**Table (3)**

Effect of ungrammatical free writing on learning grammar.

**Table 3** Effect of ungrammatical free writing on students' grammar

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	75	75.0	75.0
	Neutral	14	14.0	89.0
	Disagree	11	11.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0

Table (3) above shows that a vast majority of the respondents (75%) agree that bad teaching has a bad effect on achieving the objectives of teaching grammar. Only 11% do not agree to that. This indicates that effect of ungrammatical free writing on learning grammar.

**Table (4)**

Effect of short grammatical sentences used by teachers on students' practice of grammar.

**Table 4**Effect of teachers' short grammatical sentences on students' practice of grammar

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	56	56.0	56.0
	Neutral	20	20.0	76.0
	Disagree	24	24.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0

Table (4) above shows that a vast majority of the respondents (56%) agree that bad teaching has a bad effect on achieving the objectives of teaching grammar. Only 24% do not agree to that. This indicates that effect of short grammatical sentences used by teachers on students' practice of grammar.

**Table (5)**

Effect of teacher-centredness on learning of grammar.

**Table 5** Teacher-centredness

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	75	75.0	75.0
	Neutral	21	21.0	96.0
	Disagree	4	4.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0

Table (5) above shows that a vast majority of the respondents (75%) agree that bad teaching has a bad effect on achieving the objectives of teaching grammar. Only 4% do not agree to that. This indicates that effect of teacher-centredness on learning of grammar.

**Table (6)** Effect of using unfamiliar words on the learning of students.

**Table 6**Effect of unfamiliar words in teaching grammar on students

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	77	77.0	77.0
	Neutral	14	14.0	91.0
	Disagree	9	9.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0

Table (6) above shows that a vast majority of the respondents (77%) agree that bad teaching has a bad effect on achieving the objectives of teaching grammar. Only 9% do not agree to that. This indicates that effect of using unfamiliar words on the learning of students.

**Table (7)** Effect of lack of grammar practice.

**Table 7**Lack of grammar practice on students' output

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	65	65.0	65.0	65.0
	Neutral	30	30.0	30.0	95.0
	Disagree	5	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table (7) above shows that a vast majority of the respondents (65%) agree that bad teaching has a bad effect on achieving the objectives of teaching grammar. Only 30% do not agree to that. This indicates that effect of lack of grammar practice.

**Table (8)**

Effect of lack of teachers' motivation on teaching grammar

**Table 8**Effect of lack of teachers' motivation on teaching

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	74	74.0	74.0	74.0
	Neutral	26	26.0	26.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table (8) above shows that a vast majority of the respondents (74%) agree that bad teaching has a bad effect on achieving the objectives of teaching grammar. Only 00% do not agree to that. This indicates that effect of lack of teachers' motivation on teaching grammar

The data collected was analyzed in relation to the study hypothesis. The data was collected by questionnaire which had given to teachers who do not know how to use appropriate methods and techniques for teaching grammar.

Also analyzing the data collected from the questionnaire which had been given to teachers exclusively drawn from English language teachers in the Sudan. There are (132) English language teachers at secondary schools in Umbada Locality. A sample of 100 teachers was randomly selected for the questionnaire..

The researcher used the questionnaire as a tool in the collection of data relevant to this study. The researcher has designed questionnaire to identify the problems encountered by teachers who do not know how to use appropriate methods and techniques for teaching grammar so as to find out solutions to these problems.

The marks obtained from the questionnaire for all participants were analyzed and compared statistically by using frequencies and percentages. The analysis showed that the highest percentage which is represented agree is estimated by ( 82.2%) in contrast to the percentage of disagree which is estimated by lesser than this one. Accordingly, this justifies that there is statistical difference in terms of teachers' using of method and technique teaching grammar.

## Report Discussion

After the comparing and calculation of the sub-hypotheses; we have found that the total number of the first eight sub-hypotheses percentage (88%+68%+75%+56%+75%+77%+65%+74%) equal (82.2%) which represents negative respond justifies that Teachers do not know how to use appropriate methods and techniques for teaching grammar.

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