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The Role of Summary in Teaching Grammar Process on pre-university students.

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IN THE NAME OF GOD

The Role of Summary in Teaching

Grammar Process on Pre-university

Students

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Dedication

To my wife who I torment regularly out of love, While, she is my last favorite sibling,

She is unfortunately the only one I have.

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Abstract

The present study was conducted to investigate the role of summary in teaching grammar process on pre-university students. To this end, 48 male pre-university students in Semnan were participants. They were Math class that we called experimental group and Science class as control group.

In order to make sure there was no significant difference in proficiency level of two groups. A pre-test was conducted after 20 sessions and then on experimental group the strategy of teaching grammar with summary way were used to find out whether there was any significant difference on learning grammar of two groups. After the end of experiment the post-test were used, to find out whether there was any significant difference on learning grammar of two groups. Then the result of two groups was compared to investigate the difference between them. Result of the data analysis indicated that there was meaningful and positive relationship between control group and experimental group. In fact the scores in experimental group who taught with summary way were higher than the control group who taught with common way. Furthermore, for validity and reliability of tests pilot study were used.

Key words: summaryway, text, grammar, view, production.

Chapter 1

Back ground and purpose

1.1. Introduction

Grammar is the sound, structure and meaning system of language. All languages have grammar and each language has its own grammar. People who speak the same language are able to communicate, because they intuitively know the grammar system of that language – that is, the rules of making meaning. Students who are native speakers of English already know English grammar. They recognize the sound of English words, the meaning of those words, and the different ways of putting words together to make meaningful sentences. However, while students may be effective speakers of language they need guidance to become effective writers. They need to learn how to transfer their knowledge of grammatical concepts from oral language to written language. Effective grammar instruction begins with what students already know about grammar and it helps them use this knowledge as they write. By connecting their knowledge of oral language to written language and teachers can teach abstract grammatical terminology so that students can write and read with greater competence and confidence. Researchers strongly suggest that the most beneficial way of helping students improve their command of grammatical concept. So researchers agree that it is more effective to teach punctuation, sentence variety, and edit their writing than to approach the topic by teaching isolated skill. As students revise and edit their writing, teachers can provide

grammar instruction that guides students in their attempt to identify and correct problems in sentence structure and usage. Since writing is a complex and challenging activity for many students, teachers should focus on the grammatical concepts that are essential for the clear communication of meaning, furthermore, sentence combining is the strategy of joining short sentences into longer more complex sentences. As students engage in sentence combining activities they learn how to vary sentence structure in order to change meaning and style. Because grammar is most naturally integrated during the revising editing and proof reading phases of the writing process, students have written their first drafts and feel comfortable with their ideas and organization of their writing. Teachers may wish to employ various strategies to help students' grammatical concepts. Teaching formal grammar is very beneficial for students for two reasons. First, this has generated a great debate in second language teaching and a lot of research has been done on it. Second, there is an indication that grammar teaching has been neglected in English teaching in favor of developing communicative competence in language which results in students having poor knowledge of grammar. It is known that teaching formal grammar focused on the form, because emphasis on focusing the learners' attention on forms in order that they become conscious of the rules of those forms and eventually acquire the language. In other words, English grammar instructions are extremely important especially for English students. However, prescriptive and deductive approaches to English grammar teaching have proved ineffective and boring, because the grammar of a language is acquired not through imitation but through abstracting a set of grammatical rules from language data. The grammar of a natural language is a systematic description of these linguistic abilities of its native speakers and these linguistic abilities would enable any native speaker to speak and understand his/ her language fluently. Plus, I am going to elaborate the rule and importance of grammar in teaching

English as a foreign language. As we know the role of grammar in the acquisition of a second language has been the focus of a lively debate for thousands years during which it has followed the changes in the different theories about language acquisition. In fact various methodologies and approaches to language teaching have followed one another according to the different weight that grammar assumed in language teaching. Hostility towards grammar arose in the 1960s – 1970s when the traditional methods based on the exclusive teaching of grammar were criticized and new approaches that proposed full linguistic immersion spread. Subsequently, position that focused only on communication in teaching a foreign language was challenged in turn and grammar regained an important role in language acquisition. The negation of the importance of grammar in language acquisition was supported first of all by Krashen (1982). In Krashen's opinion acquisition and learning are completely separate and thus learning does not need to precede acquisition in the teaching a foreign language as regards grammar. Krashen (1982) recognizes that it can be useful in language learning as monitor and underlines the fact that only a small set of rules is learnable and thus usable as monitor. Krashen (1982) admits the usefulness of grammar in language teaching. Krashen (1982) states the theoretical study of grammar as a subject is not useful at all. And that teaching grammar can be valuable only if the foreign language is used as means of communication. On the other hand, many researchers have tried to restore the role of grammar in the last thirty years, for instance asserts that formal instruction affects the rate and success of second language acquisition. In addition, Giunchi (1990) believes that grammar is useful for the acquisition of a foreign language but a pedagogical model of grammar should be proposed which has the main aim of the internalization of the language system. Furthermore, Batston (1994) affirms the importance of grammar to understand language, as it provides a framework for learners to structure their learning of

the foreign language, moreover, grammar is necessary in language processing. The role of grammar is then analyzed again by Ellis (1997) who is claiming that grammar teaching helps the development of accuracy in L2. Support is also given to the importance of grammar by Purpura (2004) who points out that grammar plays a central role in language teaching as it influences the success of foreign language learning. In addition, Forjani (2011) carried out a study among academic level, which shows learners' interest in studying grammar. In particular, students started to enjoy learning grammar and recognizing its importance, as it helps the development of language proficiency and language skills. In conclusion, nowadays teachers still ask themselves whether they should intervene in language acquisition by teaching grammar. The most traditional description of grammar is given by Bade (2008) who presents it as the structure of a language, a set of rules that shows changes in words and the way they connect together to form new units.

Now let me review the history of grammar analysis in teaching language. Since the history of grammar analysis goes back to the ancient Greeks, who transformed it from the art of the writing and recognizing letters into a science of rules that govern the production of text. Greeks and Romans who adopted the Greek analysis for Latin used grammar to teach people how to use languages which were then employed in many fields, such as politics, philosophy, and religion. Then during the Renaissance, the study of Greek and Latin grammar was spread thanks to the invention and many formal studies on language were developed. On the other hand, during the 17th century there was an increase in the use of language in part of the countries as there was a strong interest in learning the language. In the 18th century the difference between implicit and explicit grammar appeared and in the 19th century the formal study of classical language took over. As regards the present days, the concept of grammar can indicate the internal function of the linguistic system, learners'

explicit knowledge of the language which is described by grammars. On the other hand, grammar as process consists of the various ways in which it develops in communication and plays an important role in language teaching. In addition, there are three kinds of grammar. First, the grammar of structure describes the way in which language items link together to form larger units, such as noun phrase. Second, the grammar of orientation includes those features that allow the speaker to relate the elements of a sentence such as verb tense. Finally, pattern grammar describes patterns associated with words. I think a brief glance on traditional and innovative methods to teach a foreign language is more beneficial to recognize the role of grammar in learning process. The major method of the past was grammar translation method, direct method, reading method and audio lingual methods. These methods developed from the 19th century through the first half of the 20th century and they had wide spread use and strong credibility at the time. The grammar translation method was used in the 19th century in the teaching of classical languages, but was then adapted in modern language teaching. This method was characterized by great attention to grammar and vocabulary and the importance of translation, the provision of literary texts to read and the use of learners' first language as a means of instruction. Usually a lesson based on the Grammar- translation method started with the explanation of rules by the teacher, then a bilingual list of vocabulary was provided, and a literary text that emphasized the presented structures was read by students. After words, the teacher proposed many exercises to the learners. The aim of this method was primarily to provide students with accuracy in writing, and to allow them to understand grammar as well as to enjoy and understand literary text. The weaknesses of this method that cannot be effective with students who do not appreciate abstract thinking and they study the foreign language in general. The other disadvantages of this method that it does not allow to learner develop their communication, because reading does not

always contain interesting topic for students. In the early 20th century, the grammar translation method was challenged by a different procedure which was based on theories that ascribed language acquisition to exposure to input and practice of speaking. The direct method, its promise was that learning occurs thanks to the association of words with objects and actions. The aim of this method was to teach students to think in the foreign language. To do so, the foreign language was used as the only mean of communication. In this method, grammar was thought implicitly and students made generalizations from what they had learnt inductively, while, the teacher helped them with questions that induced answers containing the structure to learn. Grammar study was also put aside in the reading method which was developed in the 1940_s. This method was based on the belief that reading comprehension was the most important skill to acquire in a foreign language and it aimed at the direct comprehension of the meaning of texts, without translation into the first language. Grammar had a marginal role in this method, as it was taught only when it was useful for reading. Between the 1940_s and the 1960_s, a new method arose, starting from the new emphasis given by World War II, to the need to be able to speak and understand foreign language. The audio lingual method based itself on behaviorist theories. It made wide use of mimicry and memorization and also favoring listening and speaking abilities, rather than reading and writing skills. Pronunciation had a fundamental role in this method, while grammar structures were taught sequentially and inductively the audio lingual method was definitely in contrast to grammar translation method, while, the audiolingual method was spreading in the U.S.A. its British counterpart developed. The situational method was based on the importance of the spoken language and on the exclusive use of the foreign language as means of instruction. Unlike the Audio lingual method, the situational method included a gradual presentation of grammar structure which was taught from the most simple to the most complex.

Starting from comprehension based method. The total physical response by Asher was certainly a very innovative approach, which based itself on the way children learn their mother tongue but Asher develop this method to teach foreign language that was based on instruction given by the teacher. Learners in this method had to interpret the teacher's commands and obey them through physical reactions, so that there could be a focus on the grammar structures employed in the instructions given by the teacher. Moreover, learners were not forced to speak, but they started producing utterances in the foreign language only when they felt ready to do so. The aim of this method is develop communication skills through comprehension of the foreign language. A very famous comprehension – based method is the Natural approach. This method was based on Krashen monitor theory and grammar was not considered as central in Natural approach, as it was to make the learner acquire the ability to communicate in the foreign language within real life situation and not to learn a set of grammatical rules. In this teaching methodology grammar features were automatically provided within input and they were acquired through communication activities. The Silent way developed by Gattegno, implied that the teacher used the foreign language in classroom as little as possible, while, students were forced to produce output through the use of gestures, colors, charts, and other similar devices. In this method, language was presented to students following the progressive levels of the inter language, which included only restricted grammar structures and vocabulary. Other innovative method is Suggestopedia that was certainly the most remarkable method. It was based on a branch of philosophy called suggestology in particular, the teacher introduced new materials by reading some dialogues which, dealt with topics that were interesting for students and useful for communication. Last but not least, the counseling – learning community language learning was another innovative method and it based on holistic view of learning, which was to involve the entire person of the learner, considering

his / her emotions and personality. This overview of the most influential methods of the past shows clearly how the role of grammar has switched from being considered important to being neglected many times. Some of these methods in fact are based entirely on grammar instruction; while, other rejects it in favor of the development of communication abilities. The aim here is not to determine which of these methods the best is. But we can determine the role of grammar in teaching a foreign language. In the other hand, focus on forms is a manner of teaching a foreign language in which the aim is to teach specific grammar structures and make students acquire knowledge of them, so, grammar structures taught sequentially, as it is important for the learners to be psycholinguistically ready to acquire them. In fact they learn a new structure, and then use it in an often in correct way until they achieve accuracy. Focus on forms obviously teacher- centered, as structures are necessarily presented by the teacher, and the way in which they are presented depends on the choice of an explicit or implicit approach. Explicit instruction is based on the importance of studying grammar rules and aims to teach structures in order to allow learners to build conscious representations of them and grammar rules can be presented deductively or inductively, so focus on forms is supported by the claim that grammar instruction contributes to the development of foreign language acquisition. In the middle of 20th century some radical changes led to different view on foreign language teaching, while, Chomsky's theories about universal grammar shifted the focus from the language to the learner and his/ her characteristic. The aim of focus on meaning is to provide students with occasions to use the language and to develop their communication abilities. But focus on form seems impossible to find a balance between formal instruction and communication in foreign language teaching even if different conception of teaching grammar is necessary. In fact, grammar instruction should not be seen as the mere teaching of rules, but as an instrument that allows learners to

achieve accuracy and appropriateness in the use of the target language. Finally, the role of grammar in foreign language teaching has been investigated and what is meant by grammar has been explained, and several methods to teach foreign language have been presented, in order to introduce the important dichotomy between focus on form and focus on meaning. So, this study is going to elaborate the role of summary in teaching grammar on high school students.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Second language teachers concern with different notions in the process of teaching and learning. On the other hand, they concern with defining plans for instruction and attending students' involvement to acquire the language skills and they concern with decisions about assessment of students in the process of learning. In order to accomplish assessment tasks, teachers encounter with different questions such as: What is the best technique for assessing learners' ability? Which instrument is more practical than another? Which procedure can assess authenticity and meaningfulness of instruction? Are current ways for learning assessment according to learners needs? How can teachers have assessment which motivates learning? How can they reduce stress threats in learners? In order to answer these questions, they should provide a framework for understanding the nature of assessment and evaluation in second language acquisition. Because I am teaching English as a second language in high schools, I found a good relationship between 4 skills in teaching process. All of the English teachers have shared all types of teaching experiences with one another, as well as some of our teaching beliefs, methodologies, and pedagogies. Whenever we have had teaching problems, we have been able to talk through them in the success of the process of teaching and learning, especially in terms of improving students learning grammar. Plus, the effective strategy should be applied by the teacher to achieving class objective. Although,